

Kabriti-Shara exchange views

BARCELONA (Petra) — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabriti said Tuesday he had a lengthy meeting with his Syrian counterpart Farouq Al Shara on differences between Jordan and Syria. Describing the meeting as good and objective, Mr. Kabriti said the two sides were able to exchange views on differences which surfaced between the two countries, after Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel last year. "We decided to build on points of agreement and to work hard to prevent points of disagreement on several very simple issues to add to the differences." Mr. Kabriti praised "the positive content and conciliatory tone" of the speeches delivered by the foreign ministers of Syrian and Israel at the Euro-Mediterranean conference. Mr. Kabriti also voiced support of European proposals, as presented by France. He said the Israeli side showed flexibility and readiness to offer a new initiative in the peace negotiations between the Jewish state and Syria and that the Syrian response to Israel was very positive.

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EU, Mediterranean countries agree to widen cooperation

Barcelona Declaration sets out clear mechanisms, parameters for strengthened regional interaction

Combined agency dispatches

MINISTERS FROM the European Union (EU) and its Mediterranean neighbours on Tuesday overcame persistent problems and adopted a landmark cooperation pact at the end of the Barcelona conference.

The closed-door session was delayed by more than two hours as EU negotiators held last-minute talks to resolve a row between Israel and Syria over the declaration's clauses on terrorism and nuclear weapons (see separate story).

But no country used its right to voice reservations when the document was read out in the closing ceremony.

Spanish Foreign Minister

(Continued on page 7)

Document adopted after solving row on definition of terrorism

From Ghala Abu in Barcelona

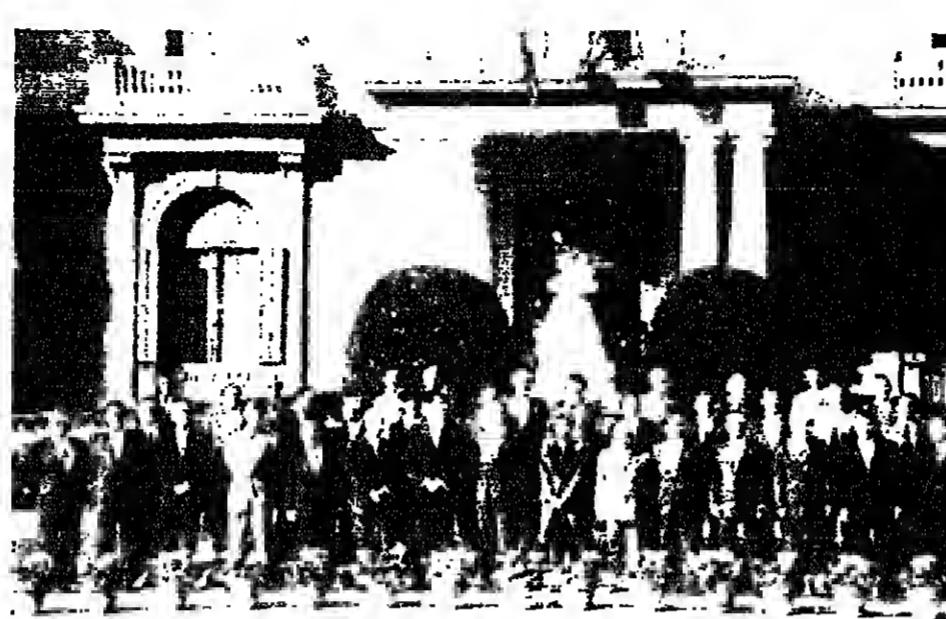
other authorities, it said, officials will meet periodically and will consider stepping up exchange of information and improving extradition procedures.

These meetings, however, "will be organised with due regard for the need for a differentiated approach that takes into account the diversity of the situation in each country."

Unlike other issues which won a consensus by all parties, terrorism was regarded

To strengthen cooperation among police, judicial and

(Continued on page 7)



Spain's King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and foreign ministers of 26 European Union and Mediterranean countries which participated in the Barcelona conference which ended Tuesday (AFP photo)

Euro-Med conference reflected MENA summit efforts — Regent

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday described the European Mediterranean conference, which concluded in Barcelona Tuesday, as an extension of "the collective effort of the 63 nationalities which contributed to the success of the Amman economic summit."

Speaking after chairing a Cabinet session, Prince Hassan said he was able during his recent visit to Luxembourg to get familiarised with developments in the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue.

Prince Hassan, who was briefed at the session by Finance Minister Basel Jardach on the 1996 draft fiscal budget, commended the economic reform programme

and said the Kingdom was on the right track in restructuring its economy.

International evaluation of this restructuring programme, the Prince said, attests to the fact that "we reached the threshold of spending without resorting to foreign expenditures."

The Regent said he was hopeful that the government would be able to strike a balance between the available resources and the needs of citizens and ministries.

"I believe, thank God, that we are on the right track, but what is important is to explain such matters to citizens, and I am fully confident in the council of ministers in this regard."

Prince Hassan told the press after the meeting that it was difficult for him to judge the draft fiscal budget, adding that it will be discussed extensively in the coming few days.

Before the start of the Cabinet session, Prince Hassan had a meeting with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and discussed with him "a number of important issues," Jordan Television reported.

JTV said the meeting focused on the fiscal budget.

Mr. Jardach told the Crown Prince that the budget was the outcome of five years of continued efforts in implementing the economic reform programme.

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Former Afghan president leaves rebel alliance

PESHAWAR (R) — A former Afghan president has resigned from a rebel alliance he led, accusing colleagues of holding secret contacts with the Afghan government, party sources said on Tuesday.

The sources, quoted by the Afghan Islamic Press, said Sloghatullah Mojaddidi, who was president for a few months after the overthrow of communist president, Najibullah in April 1992, had quit as head of the four-party Supreme Coordination Council.

A spokesman for the opposition Hezb-e-Islami faction said alliance members were to hold emergency talks in the Pakistani city of Peshawar later on Tuesday to discuss the resignation.

Sources in Mojaddidi's small Jabbat-e-Nijat-e-Milli party said he had been angered by reports that alliance members had held secret talks with the Kabul government led by President Burhanuddin Rabbani and his military chief Ahmad Shah Masood.

The sources said Mr. Rabbani and Mr. Masood were trying to persuade opposition factions to join them against Taliban militia which has been besieging Kabul since early September.

They said Kabul government emissaries had held separate talks with Hezb-e-Islami leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Abdul Karim Khalil, leader of the Shi'ite Muslim Hezb-e-Wahdat faction, and had made overtures to former communist warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum.

Hezb-e-Islami spokesman Ustad Saeed told Reuters that the alliance had asked Mr. Mojaddidi's younger brother Hashmatullah to try to convince the elderly leader to change his mind.

"The charge that Masood's envoy met Hekmatyar is baseless," Mr. Saeed said. "There have been insignificant contacts with Rabbani officials at a lower level in the (eastern Afghan city of) Jalalabad. How can we talk with someone who is collapsing?"

"We hope Mojaddidi will not leave the alliance at this difficult time," Mr. Saeed added.

Afghan government officials said on Monday they were in touch with opposition factions, but did not state the outcome.

U.N. officials also say the Kabul government has been engaged in intensive diplomacy to try to enlist its foes in the fight against the Taliban.

Gen. Dostum said last month that he was resisting pressure from Uzbekistan, Russia and Iran to ally with the government to thwart the advancing religious student militia.



Supporters of an unidentified candidate for Wednesday's parliamentary elections in Egypt clap and shout slogans from a pick-up truck cruising through a Cairo street during a campaign tour (AFP photo)

The camel races against the car in Egyptian parliamentary elections

CAIRO (AFP) — When Egyptians go to the polls on Wednesday for legislative elections, many of them will not be fought-over campaign symbols.

Each of the 4,040 candidates has one of 99 symbols assigned to him to allow the largely illiterate population to recognise their favourite on the ballot.

But after the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) mapped up what are considered the two best symbols — the crescent moon and the camel — for its candidates, opposition parties cried foul.

Opposition leaders in the race then struck deals to ensure the best of the remaining symbols for themselves, Suleiman Shafiq, a member of an independent watchdog team, told AFP.

Thus, the head of the liberal Wafid took a car, the leader of the Marxist Tagammu got a boat and the Islamist Labour Party president a star.

But the state commission that distributes the signs "exploits them politically, for ex-

ample by giving the Islamic candidate Adel Hussein the gun symbol as a hint at Muslim militants," Mr. Shafiq said.

The symbols are supposed to be dealt from a set list by order of the candidate's registration in their district.

Amid criticism of the NDP monopoly on the crescent and camel, which top the list, the Interior Ministry passed instructions mid-way through the campaign that candidates could change symbols if they wished.

Hopefuls seek to avoid mundane items that voters might mock, such as the fish, the pail or the coffeepot.

Another sensible sign is the bicycle, which in some forms of Egyptian slang means "homosexual."

Muslim Brotherhood candidate Ahmad Seif Al Islam Hassan Al Banna said he delayed his registration to get a good symbol: "I would have got the fish. I cannot be represented by a fish."

He finally received the scales — "of justice," he said.

Mohammad Al Sakhawi, a Labour Party official, called for a reform in the symbols

"No doubt the symbols and their order affect the choice of uneducated voters who are used to considering the best comes at the top of the list," Ahmad Nagi, an expert with the Al Abram Centre for Political Studies, said.

Egypt's illiteracy rate is estimated at 50 per cent, according to government statistics.

"The government monopolised the two top symbols and so seem unified, while the opposition must make a lot of effort to have people know their symbols," Mr. Nagi said.

He pointed out that the Nasserist Party has more than 40 candidates who are represented by 18 different symbols.

"Before the 1952 Revolution, peasants knew the parties by their leaders, such as Saad Zaghlul of the Wafid and Mustapha Kamel of the National Party," Mr. Shafiq said.

He added that the Nasserist Party has more than 40 candidates who are represented by 18 different symbols.

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When the multi-party system was officially adopted in 1984, each party did have a symbol: the crescent for the NDP, the date palm for the Wafid, the watch for the Tagammu and the star for Labour.

The crescent moon, a symbol of Islam, is also significant for voters because it and the cross were symbols of the 1919 Revolution "representing the unity of Muslims and Christians against British occupation," Mr. Nagi said.

The date palm is a common poetic symbol for nobility and tradition.

But Mr. Nagi said in the end symbols were not the opposition's main problem in attracting voters.

He blamed "the parties" failure to put forward clearly distinguished platforms and slogans to face the NDP, whose candidates can lean on the government's accomplishments."

President Saddam referred the case of the four to the Iraqi National Assembly for examination, the papers reported.

"They have illegally possessed plots of land, various cars and finance using their posts," Al Jumhouriyah reported.

The four officials are Major-General Nujmedin Al Nasabandi, Major-General Waa'd Mohammad Suleiman, Major-General Hatim Ali Khalaf, and Dr. Majid Khorshid.

Gen. Nasabandi was previously deputy interior minister

"No rights improvement"

Iraqis still endure arbitrary arrests, amputations and other state-sponsored human rights abuses, according to a U.N. report published Monday.

Finally, the environmentalist Green Party has put six candidates in the race, but the party is hampered by the recent closure of its newspaper for lack of funds.

"We're working slowly but surely," the Green's treasurer, Ashari Abdul Galli, said. "We're not hurried. It may take 50 years or even more. We're the party of the future."

"I don't expect any of our candidates to win considering government control of the vote," Mr. Sabahi said, urging the state not to interfere in elections.

"Of course the government will cheat in the elections. If I were in power with the Umma Party, I would cheat too. That's why the state must stay out," he said.

Fez hat becomes an issue in Egyptian polls

CAIRO (AFP) — With campaigns to declare the fez the national hat or to reunify Egypt and Sudan, Egypt's tiny political parties are trying to make their voice heard in Wednesday's parliamentary election.

Small parties, mostly new and virtually unknown by the public, admit they have little chance in the race for the People's Assembly but their political stances, while unique and little heard, are certainly strongly held.

"We should have a huge national conference to come up with a national head covering. France has the beret, Israel has the kippa. It is a shame Egypt has no national hat," Ahmad Al Sabahi, head of the Umma Party, told AFP.

"I personally back the fez, but we could have several designers come up with some ideas, then put them to a popular referendum to choose," Mr. Sabahi, 30, said.

Mr. Sabahi, whose conical fez never leaves his head, has written numerous books on dream interpretation, horoscopes and "the

first book in Arabic on healing by pendulums."

"I'm also an inventor. I created a new sport, Rockball, which is better than handball or basketball. There is now a league for it, but I had to stop working with it to enter politics."

Mr. Sabahi created the Umma in 1983 and claims to have 65 candidates running in this year's vote. Aside from its hat platform, the self-described "moderate Islamic" Umma calls for the implementation of Islamic Sharia law in Egypt.

The Takafal party, founded in 1995 with 35 candidates, also calls for Sharia, but stresses the Islamic principle of "takafal" (mutual support).

Its president, Osama Shaltout, urges "a conference to strengthen takafal" by ending the 1,300-year-old schism between the Sunni and Shi'ite branches of Islam to create a "single Islam."

The tiny fringe parties share a number of characteristics, chief among them lack of funds and very mod-

ern offices.

The Social Justice Party (SJP) shares its cramped Cairo headquarters with the National Centre for Fighting AIDS.

The SJP office is also protected by two large German shepherd dogs, "Jack" and "Boose," because its head Mohammad Abdul Al has received death threats from the armed militant Gamma Al Islamiyah group.

"We are in the forefront of parties attacking fundamentalism and terrorism," Mr. Abdul Al said, adding that two of the six SJP candidates are running in the south Egyptian town of Malawi, a Muslim militant hotbed.

The Gamma vowed to kill Mr. Abdul Al for insulting its spiritual head Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, currently in prison in the U.S., after he wrote that the blind cleric once escaped Egyptian police by dressing as a woman.

The Unionist Democratic Party, created in 1990, has 16 candidates running on the platform of reunifying

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Finally, the environmentalist Green



Aqaba port development study completed

AMMAN (Petra) — Japanese and Jordanian officials Tuesday signed minutes of their discussions and studies on the development of the Aqaba seaport.

The minutes signed at the Ministry of Transport, include main proposals presented by the ministries of energy and mineral resources and transport, as well as the Jordan Port Corporation, the Jordan Phosphates Mines Company and the Arab Potash Company.

The minutes were signed until the year 2010 and provides for the purchase of heavy machinery and equipment for the new installations at the ports corporation. The minutes also provide for the expansion of the main docking areas for vessels as well as developing the containers harbour.

According to the study, the cost of carrying out this work will be around \$80 million.

A short term plan lasting until the year of 2000 was also outlined in the minutes. The plan proposes the development of the industrial harbour and the containers zone at the cost of \$46 million.

A ports corporation official said that the two plans provide for expanding the wharfs and enlarging the storage space near the port. The Japanese team, which

is due to leave for home today, also Tuesday met Minister of Transport Samir Kawar and discussed two plans designed to cater to the expected increase in operations in Aqaba.

Mr. Kawar underlined the importance for Japanese and Jordanian cooperation in transport fields and thanked the Japanese team which represents the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for their efforts and the Japanese government for its continued assistance to the Kingdom in different fields.

The two sides discussed the objectives of both plans which are aimed at transforming Aqaba into a main regional port serving trade and transit operations and attracting vessels from around the world.

Bahraini doctors to gain training in Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Bahraini Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Ben Seif Al Musallum on Tuesday said his country was interested in enrolling Bahraini doctors and paramedics to training courses organised in Jordan. At a meeting with Minister of Health and Acting Foreign Minister Aref Batanah, the Bahraini envoy commended bilateral relations between the two countries and expressed Bahrain's desire to benefit from Jordan's experience in medical fields. Mr. Musallum also said the Royal Medical Services should be given priority in offering medical treatment to Bahraini nationals, whether civilians or military personnel. The minister and Mr. Musallum discussed bilateral relations and means of enhancing them.

Mixed media exhibit carves paths into male psyche

By Ici Wabbeh

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Darar Al Funun, of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, is hosting the works of Iraqi artist Ismail Fattah. As varied as sculptures, etchings and paintings, the exhibits are in mixed media, passing from bronze to acrylic and ink on paper and canvas.

The sculptures, mainly on the smaller size, are less of what the idea of sculpting is: carving away at unwanted material, and more of moulding and soldering piece over piece to a whole.

Man is the subject of the bronze works. Prisoner in a box, headless, alone or with his dreams or with women, he is the master of the universe, or at least the artist's universe. It might not be flattering to women, but it is telling.

Almost deformed, sketchy and with no facial features, Fattah's men look rugged, anatomical, stony and somehow defeated.

A homage to Picasso is rendered in his Photo of Picasso, an incomplete rectangle covering the torso, face and one thigh of a shape.

In Man and Mask, ironically it is the mask that looks human, with asymmetric but existing features, while the man's face is a contorted balf with the other half a straight face cut in golden bronze.

The statue is bigger this time, the hands holding the mask clenched in fists and the shaped part of the head almost hideous. Is the mask meant to hide this face? Is it meant to hide his identity and thoughts?

The Man with Women is a seated figure, hands on the knees, shoulders holding the torsos and heads of three stylised women whose salient point are the breasts. Erotic or motherly, one is left to ask and perhaps unable to answer.

That is not before the next group, that of Man and His Dreams, where a half whole, half hollowed man, sealed again, has his dreams on a panel next to an etched in squares.

Apparently all he dreams of is women's faces, torsos and hearts. But while the

An acrylic on paper by Ismail Fattah

man's shape is vague, the dreams are clearly defined; the artist again plays with real and virtual reality, with upside down values and perception.

Headless Man is just that: a figure whose lower limbs form the forelegs of a frame he sits on and whose hands have become an integral part of his square-shaped body.

The Man in a Square has assumed bleeding proportions, his body expanded and trying to pass through two crossing diagonal lines that seem to block his way. Doubly prisoner, he seems to also have doubled his size to escape his fate.

Dream-like and unreal, stylised to the point of being grotesquely deformed, the statues are epitomised in the form of Sisyphus whose plight is symbolised in a huge rock covering his head and part of his body, pushing him up an inclined position, struggling to overcome the mythological curse.

The exhibition is showing until Dec. 7.

Departing from the

bronze sculptures, the artist's paintings are mostly of faces and heads with features clearly defined in bright colours and usually in groups of two or many more.

Of mixed media acrylic and ink on paper and canvas, the painted pairs are usually of a man and a woman (or more in some cases) and the many are simply titled: Nine Faces, Twelve Painted Faces or Seven Faces.

Very often the mask is present as if with the desire to hide true feelings or facial expressions behind it.

Two big-size canvases of pairs have a pigeon and a colourful cock respectively, but normally the paintings are of stark faces peering at the viewer from the frames, often framed themselves, again, by a mask.

The works often look like naive painting, but at times, voluptuously curved figures confirm the artistic potential of the author.

The exhibition is showing until Dec. 7.

Association to name attorneys to defend Bay'at Al Imam suspects

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordan Bar Association (JBA) is soon expected to forward names of six defence attorneys for 13 people accused of sabotage after their trial was postponed indefinitely in October because the radical Islamist group known as Bay'at Al Imam (pledge of allegiance).

The defendants, who were expelled twice from court for disrupting the session, belong to the radical Islamist group known as Bay'at Al Imam (pledge of allegiance).

The court postponed the case on Oct. 22, when some of the defendants refused to appoint attorneys at the State Security Court,

defendants said they will defend themselves, or "God would decide their fate."

The court then suspended the case indefinitely, saying it would contact the JBA to nominate six attorneys to defend the men on trial.

The defendants, who were expelled twice from court for disrupting the session, belong to the radical Islamist group known as Bay'at Al Imam (pledge of allegiance).

They are charged with slander against His Majesty King Hussein and illegal possession and manufacturing of explosive materials.

Meanwhile, the State Security Court today will hear three cases.

One of the cases involved a group of six people, known as the "Islamic Revivalists," accused of sabotage.

The court is expected to announce the jurisdiction over the case because over the past two months, defense attorneys and the prosecutor general argued over the court's right to adjudicate the case.

The attorneys charged that their clients should be tried in civil courts, while the state prosecutor general contested that the case was within his jurisdiction.

The group is charged with illegal possession and manufacturing of explosive materials, automatic weapons and guns for illicit

use, and belonging to an illegal organisation.

The second case to be determined by the State Court is that of two Jordanians involved in an attack on a French diplomat in February.

Again, attorneys for the defence contested the court's jurisdiction, demanding that the case be split between the State Court and the Criminal Court.

The attorneys' claim that the State Security court had no jurisdiction over cases of attempted murder.

The formal charges against Salem A. Jaradat and Ahmad Qassem, the defendants, include shoot-

ing and wounding French diplomat Gilles Heine in Wadi Mujib and plotting to carry out extremist attacks and possessing and manufacturing illegal arms.

The third case involves Muslim militant Atta Abu Rishieh, 53, accused of slandering against King Hussein in October.

Mr. Abu Rishieh, spokesman for the illegal Hezb Al Tahrir (Liberation Party), who confessed to slandering the King, could face up to three years' imprisonment if found guilty.

Five awarded for thwarting robbery

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police Chief Lieutenant General Abdul Rahman Udwani Tuesday awarded five citizens in Irbid for helping to abort an attempted robbery of their neighbour's house, officials said.

Brigadier General Hisham Ensour, Director of Irbid Police Department said that last week a gang of four people, in their mid-20s, planned to rob a 60-year-old man identified as Ibrahim A., who lived alone in Ashrafieh town of Irbid.

Brigadier Ensour told the Jordan Times that the men entered the house and tied Ibrahim up, and searched his house.

The victim's neighbours noticed that something was happening in their neighbour's house "since he was seldom visit-

ed by anyone," according to Brig. Gen. Ensour.

The five men approached Ibrahim's house, knocked on the door but no one answered. Minutes later, the four intruders came rushing out of the house," Brig. Gen. Ensour said.

He said that the five men went after the intruders, and caught up with three of them. He added that the fourth suspect, who fled to Amman, was arrested the following day.

According to the police official, all four suspects were employed and two of them had criminal records.

"I was surprised at these citizens' spirit which reflects their community awareness," Brig. Gen. Ensour added.

The five Irbid citizens who were given bravery awards by Lieut. Gen. Udwani were Mohammad Mustafa Juweid, Ahmad

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U.K. dampens talk of imminent Northern Ireland peace deal

LONDON (R) — Britain dampened speculation Tuesday of a breakthrough in the stalled Northern Ireland peace process in time for a visit by U.S. President Bill Clinton.

A senior British official said that Prime Minister John Major had a useful 30-minute telephone conversation with Irish Prime Minister John Bruton Monday evening and that the two men might confer again later Tuesday.

But he ruled out rumours emanating from Dublin that the two prime ministers, trying to break a deadlock over terms for all-party political talks on Northern Ireland's future, might issue a joint declaration later Tuesday.

The optimism was fuelled in part by a report in

Duhlin's Irish Times, which said there had been "intensive discussions" overnight involving the Irish and British governments, Clinton administration officials and Sinn Fein, the IRA's political arm.

Irish Radio added that a new wave of optimism had surfaced in Washington overnight and that Mr. Clinton was being regularly briefed.

The British official said civil servants from both governments were still locked in an almost continuous exchange of views.

But he said Mr. Major's Downing Street office had not been in contact overnight with the Clinton administration.

"Work continues, that's obvious. But I can't tell you

when we can bring that work to a conclusion," the official said.

He said the British government did not feel impelled to strike a deal in time for Mr. Clinton's visit.

The U.S. president arrives in London Wednesday and will spend Thursday in Northern Ireland and Friday in Ireland.

Irish officials, displaying distinctly more optimism than their British counterparts, said progress had been made toward ending a logjam that has stalled the path to permanent peace since guerrilla truces began 16 months ago.

"The prevailing wind is a positive one at the moment but there are still some things to be resolved which will require some further

work today," one official said in Dublin.

The impasse is over the vexed question of scrapping the weapons with which Irish Republican Army (IRA) guerrillas waged a 25-year-old war against British rule in Northern Ireland until they called a truce on Aug. 31, 1994. The IRA's pro-British extremist Protestant foes matched the ceasefire soon after.

Britain insists on an arms handover before Sinn Fein is given a ticket to the talks.

Ireland wants preliminary all-party talks to run in parallel to the work of an outside panel of experts that would adjudicate on the timing and logistics of guerrilla disarmament.

The optimism was fuelled in part by a report in

EU to seek remedy to trade in flesh

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Union (EU) will this week attack a scourge which is fast becoming as lucrative as the international drugs trade, but twice as difficult to fight — trafficking in women.

A two-day conference organised by the European Commission, starting Friday, will seek solutions to a growing traffic that leaves police forces in the 15-nation bloc baffled.

"It's the first time a spotlight has been put on this problem," a spokeswoman for Anita Grabin, the commissioner for justice and home affairs, said Monday.

Since frontiers between Eastern and Western Europe were relaxed earlier this decade, women from the East have fast replaced women from the developing world as prey for the prostitution racket.

Faced with poverty and unemployment at home, they are being tempted to richer, Western European countries to work as barmaids, dancers, hostesses and hairdressers only to be forced one way or another into prostitution on arrival.

Most of them are under 25 and many are only 15-18 years old, according to the

Geneva-based International Organisation for Migration (IOM), which helped organise the conference.

"I am looking for hostesses and dancers for Swiss night clubs. Work permit, contract. Outstanding pay. Call me," reads a typical advertisement in the Hungarian daily "Expressz".

"The violence and exploitation endured by these women often goes beyond the exploitation suffered by other trafficked migrants," the IOM said in a report.

The full scale of the problem remains unknown, however, because few women are prepared or able to report what has happened to them to the police," it says.

The problem is largely that while drugs and drug smugglers are seized, the women concerned are usually sent home before they have a chance to speak and many are afraid to speak for fear of their families back home finding out.

When combined with illegal immigration in general the trafficking is as lucrative as the drugs trade, but traffickers find it much easier to slip the net.

"High profits can be made

by forcing women into prostitution since the risks for the traffickers are not great. Sentences against traffickers are light, and there are few successful convictions," the IOM report said.

Willy Bruggeman, a senior policeman at the Hague-based European police agency, Europol, told Reuters in a recent interview trafficking posed a new challenge for police.

"Immigration is quite a complicated business, more complicated than drugs. There are changing trends, new ethnic groupings, new smuggling techniques. It's not clear what are the legal tools to combat it," he said.

"I'm talking about mafia type networks."

The Dutch authorities say the prostitution racket is increasingly controlled by groups from Eastern Europe.

"They are highly organised, extremely violent," the IOM said. "There are reports Western brothel keepers find themselves under increasing pressure from organised gangs based in the (Eastern European) countries to hire Eastern European women."

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"High profits can be made

Lithuania grapples with wave of bombings

VILNIUS (R) — The Baltic state of Lithuania, fighting a wave of 61 bomb attacks this year, has passed an emergency decree demanding people turn over any explosives in their possession, a government spokesman said Tuesday.

But some experts doubted the action would have much effect against the attacks, which have claimed five lives this year and are widely blamed on organised crime.

The government has decided to take strict measures to fight this extremely dangerous form of terrorism, which threatens private business and the press and damages Lithuania's image.

Official results released Monday night, gave the ruling party 145 in the 175 seats in the new National Assembly — the first elected since the death in 1993 of the nation's founding father Felix Hophouet-Boigny.

The Ministry of Defence and all businesses with permission to possess explosives would be required to count their stock and inform the police, he added.

Lithuanian police say that many of the explosives were left behind when the Russian army quit Lithuania two years ago and are now available on the black market.

A senior police official was sceptical over the government's decree. "We already have laws prohibiting the possession of explosives," the official told Reuters. "The criminals won't voluntarily hand in their explosives."

The polls end with Dec. 17 municipal elections and are the second since the advent of multi-party politics in 1990.

Official results released Monday night, gave the ruling party 145 in the 175 seats in the new National Assembly — the first elected since the death in 1993 of the nation's founding father Felix Hophouet-Boigny.

The Rally of the Republicans (RDR), formed by disenchanted ruling party members after Mr. Bedie took over Mr. Hophouet-Boigny's death, won at least 13 seats in its first electoral test — principally in the mainly Muslim north.

The Ivoirian Popular Front (FPI), which spearheaded the campaign that forced Mr. Hophouet-Boigny to accept multi-party politics in 1990, won nine seats.

Sen. Bob Graham, who asked for the report, said Russia's plutonium-producing plants are particularly worrying because their design resembles the Chernobyl plant, scene of the Soviets' biggest nuclear disaster.

Russia still has three reactors designed for plutonium production, and all were built more than 30 years ago. Since then, significant safety improvements have

been made in plant design, the report noted.

"Although detailed safety analyses are not available to DOE officials, they believe the reactors have safety problems because of their design and age," the report said.

The third plant, at Chelyabinsk, in the foothills of the Ural Mountains, no longer is producing plutonium, although it reprocesses spent fuel from nuclear submarines.

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U.S. concerned about Russian nuclear plants; inspectors barred

WASHINGTON (AP) — Russians claiming "military sensitivity" have kept American officials from a full safety inspection of aging Soviet-era plutonium plants, according to a congressional report.

Kristen Suokko, an Energy Department (DOE) official in charge of international safety problems, said in an interview that she was awaiting an invitation to inspect the plant at Krasnoyarsk in Siberia.

"We're keeping our fingers crossed," she said.

In September, after two years of efforts, U.S. inspectors were able to conduct full inspection of another plant in nearby Tomsk, she said.

The report by the General Accounting Office (GAO), which conducts investigations for Congress, cited difficulties U.S. officials have had inspecting Russian plants under efforts to cooperate in nuclear safety. It said Energy Department

officials were denied full access to Tomsk and Krasnoyarsk "because of their military sensitivity."

In the case of Tomsk, that referred to inspection attempts before the September visit, Ms. Suokko said.

The United States has spent \$26.9 million to help counter dangers from nuclear waste, largely from production of weapons-grade plutonium, in the former Soviet Union, the report said. That covers studies of contamination in the Arctic region, waste cleanup and other activities.

The GAO report quoted a private laboratory analysis that showed that Russia's nuclear weapons programme releases about 650 times as much radioactivity as the U.S. weapons complex.

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An undated file photo shows troops of Japan's Ground Self Defence force marching during an annual military parade. Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama vowed to adopt a new defence plan despite a coalition rift (AFP photo)

Murayama vows to adopt new defence plan despite coalition rift

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama vowed Tuesday to adopt a new defence policy outline by the end of the day, despite a rift within the ruling coalition over the issue of banning arms exports.

The country's first defence policy outline in two decades envisages a more streamlined military in the post cold war era with 20 per cent fewer troops or around 145,000, down from the current ceiling of 180,000.

The coalition government agreed to the cut in military personnel last week and Jiji Press reported Tuesday that the three parties had also reached an agreement on the wording of a clause calling for the abolition of nuclear arms.

Under the agreement, the parties agreed to delete the word "ultimate" from a clause on the abolition of nuclear weapons. Instead, the new wording says Japan will make "steady and realistic" efforts to achieve the same goal, Jiji said.

The agreement reportedly left arms exports as the major sticking point.

Under three principles adopted in 1967, Japan prohibits exports of arms to Communist countries, countries embroiled in

United Nations and countries involved in military conflict or likely to be involved in the near future.

The conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the biggest party in the coalition, has so far rejected demands by its two smaller coalition partners to include the three principles in the defence policy outline.

LDP sources were quoted as saying that they were responding to the wishes of Japanese defence contractors, which want the possibility of exports left open in preparation for the launch of joint arms production with the United States.

Japan's major defence contractors include Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd., Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd., Toshiba Corp. and NEC Corp.

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Under three principles adopted in 1967, Japan prohibits exports of arms to Communist countries, countries embroiled in

the dissolution, but have reiterated their demand that elections be held under a neutral caretaker administration.

They insist free polls are impossible under Mrs. Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and have threatened to boycott the polls if their demands are not met.

Ambassador Merrill also met Mrs. Hasina last week, raising hopes in some quarters that the United States was prepared to mediate between the two sides.

Ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party sources said Mrs. Zia would soon reply to a letter sent by Mrs. Hasina containing the opposition demands.

The two women leaders spoke on the telephone late Sunday to discuss the crisis. Although there was no immediate breakthrough, their first conversation since March 1994 was greeted with optimism.

The opposition resigned en masse from the 330-member parliament to push their demands for Mrs. Zia's resignation and polls under a caretaker government. Mrs. Zia shunned the demands as "unconstitutional."

Opposition groups led by the Awami League's Sheikh Hasina Wajed welcomed

Brazil studies zeppelin patrol for Amazon

BRASILIA (R) — Brazilian officials are studying the possibility of using zeppelins to patrol the Amazon rain forest, state-owned news agency Agencia Brasil reported. Officials from the transport, air force and environment ministries would discuss the plan Tuesday, it said. Under the proposal, zeppelins would guard the Amazonian frontiers, carry goods and passengers and monitor any kind of emergency in the vast jungle. The agency quoted Jose Seixas Lourenco, secretary of state for the Amazon as saying airships had been used in Brazil during World War 1.

Onion fair attracts thousands

BERN, Switzerland (AP) — An onion fair dating back more than 500 years attracted tens of thousands of people to the Swiss capital Monday. Tourists and locals crowded medieval streets where more than 700 brightly-coloured stalls displayed some 80.3 metric tonnes of onions, twisted into plaited garlands and figures. Also on sale were the traditional onion and cheese tarts and candy. According to legend, the market commemorates the gift given by the citizens of the nearby town of Fribourg when fire broke out in Bern on May 14, 1405. In return, the people of Bern granted the Fribourg peasants the right to sell their winter vegetables at city markets.

007 hits Stockholm

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Agent 007 hit Stockholm Monday. Actor Pierce Brosnan, who plays James Bond in the newly released *GoldenEye*, said Sean Connery was his favourite actor as the famed martini-sipping agent. Together with co-star Izabella Scorupco, Brosnan met the press at the Grand Hotel shortly before Monday night's gala opening. "There will be more Bond movies," Brosnan said. The Irish-born Brosnan has signed contracts for two more Bond movies and expects to play a fourth. Although there are no scripts yet, locations have already been selected. The Swedish News Agency (TT) said "Izabella is a wonderful woman," Brosnan said about Polish-born actress-model Scorupco, who has also lived in Sweden.

After death, Robert Bolt 'still drops by for a drink'

LONDON (AP) — Robert Bolt was a man for all seasons — and then some, if his widow Sarah Miles is to be believed. The Oscar-winning screenwriter husband, who died in February aged 70, often visits their country home. Miles told the Daily Mail newspaper in an interview published Saturday. His corporeal body is buried in their backyard. Bolt was an atheist who did not share his wife's beliefs in the afterlife, but the day he died of complications following a stroke, Miles says she told him: "When you go, damn well come back and give me proof that I'm right and you're wrong?" "And he did, and he keeps doing it, and that's why I'm not lonely," Miles told the Daily Mail. "He started doing the weird things, moving things around the house, a drink would suddenly disappear from someone's glass." Bolt was a heavy drinker. Bolt, who collaborated closely with British Director David Lean, won Oscars for *A Man For All Seasons* (1966) and *Doctor Zhivago* (1965). Bolt was twice married to Miles, who starred in the 1970 production of *Ryan's Daughter*.

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Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich (left) announces to journalists at his office in Marietta, Georgia, that he does not intend to run for the presidency of the United States in 1996 (AFP photo)

Gingrich rules out running for president in 1996

MARIETTA, Ga. (R) — U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Newt Gingrich, ending months of speculation about his political ambitions, said Monday he would not seek the Republican presidential nomination in 1996.

The Georgia Republican told a news conference at his Georgia district office his duties as speaker, particularly in the battle with President Bill Clinton over a balanced budget, precluded a White House run next year.

"We've decided that we would explicitly, definitely close the door so there's no more speculation, I will not run next year for president," Mr. Gingrich said. "My intent is to run for re-election to the House and hopefully be speaker again."

China launches peace offensive after war games

HONG KONG (R) — A pro-China newspaper in Hong Kong Tuesday portrayed Taiwan as war-like and China as peace-loving in a new round of polemics on Taiwan independence.

The front-page story in the Beijing-controlled daily Wen Wei Po came a day after a warning that China's military exercises had proved it could launch a "shattering attack" on the island.

Wen Wei Po quoted what it said were Taiwan businessmen in China as saying that China was peaceful but that their home island was beligerent.

"Fujian (province) is turning military airports into civil fields and opening military ports to (civil) piers," the paper quoted a "Mr. Lin" as saying.

"You hear little discussion

about war and none about attacking Taiwan," Mr. Lin was quoted as saying.

The atmosphere in Taiwan was different, with the streets full of talk of war and the government buying foreign weapons and holding war games, he was quoted as saying.

However, the last military exercise Taiwan held was on Oct. 7 in preparation for the ceremonial Oct. 10 National Day. No shots were fired.

In an earlier article Monday Wen Wei Po said Chinese war games staged in Fujian last weekend were based on an offensive strategy to "completely crush" opponents and were a severe warning to Taiwan against independence.

China views Taiwan as a rebel province, the last refuge of a Nationalist gov-

ernment which fled there from the mainland after losing a civil war to the Communists in 1949.

Wen Wei Po said the people of Fujian, the Chinese province closest to Taiwan, welcomed cross-strait business.

"But for the reunification of the motherland, the people in Fujian will not hesitate to sacrifice their interest," it said.

Wen Wei Po quoted Beijing experts on Taiwan as saying the war games had shown China's determination to unify the country.

"China has not changed its basic principle of trying every means to avoid war, which will do no good either to Taiwan or to China...and will only make foreigners laugh at us," said Jiang Dianming, director of Beijing's Institute of

Taiwan Studies.

But "peaceful reunification" and the absence of any promise not to use force were not contradictory, he said.

The aim of China's war games was to show non-peaceful means would be used if Taiwan went independent, he added.

Taiwan's inseparability from China was the necessary basis for unity talks, he said.

Mr. Jiang said the latest war games had no direct link to Taiwan's Dec. 2 general election.

"Even if there was no election, we would have to stand in combat readiness against the separation inclination emerging on Taiwan, because the core issue is national sovereignty," he said.

Burma delegates told to hold firm on constitution

RANGOON (R) — Delegates to Burma's military-run Constitutional Convention were told Tuesday to take all the time they need to draft a constitution and not to allow their task to be disrupted.

"We all have the responsibility to maintain the success of the national convention as gained so far," Major General Myo Nyunt, chairman of the convening committee, told the 631 delegates at the opening ceremony of the fifth session of the convention which has been meeting sporadically for nearly three years.

"SLORC will never allow the good situation so far achieved to be weakened," he said, referring to the ruling State Law and Order

Restoration Council. "We will never allow the National Convention... to be disturbed by any forces."

Last week the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) party, led by Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, attacked the convention process as undemocratic and threatened a boycott if it was not changed.

Although NLD scored a 1990 election landslide victory, SLORC never allowed it to govern, saying the elected representatives only had powers to draft a new constitution.

Some NLD members and other "elected representatives" have participated in a very limited way in previous constitutional talks.

A total of 97 NLD members were eligible to attend the convention, he said.

Italian parties agree on vote; president urges calm

ROME (R) — Italy's political rivals Tuesday agreed on the need to call an early general election but President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro called for calm during the country's looming European Union (EU) presidency. Speaking on an official visit to the Netherlands, Mr. Scalfaro said Italy had "a great responsibility towards Europe and not just Europe" during its time at the helm of the 15-member EU.

Italy takes over the rotat-

ing EU six-month presidency in January and some centrists have called for technocrat Prime Minister Lamberto Dini to stay in office during this high-profile period to prevent potential chaos.

The main point for all of us is to ensure that nobody tomorrow can say Italy's problems have had a negative effect on Europe," Mr. Scalfaro told Italian RAI television.

However, the publicly-

declared position of leading politicians seemed to be hardening towards an election as soon as possible after months of political jostling.

Massimo d'Alema, leader of the former communist Democratic Party of the Left (PDS) that supports Mr. Dini, told reporters that the country needed an election.

"The acting is over, let's go and vote," he said Monday night, agreeing

Sri Lankan army rolls into Jaffna, rebels vow revenge

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan troops tightened the noose Tuesday around the northern rebel stronghold of Jaffna as the guerrilla movement's leader warned it would be hard for the army to hold on to its gains.

The military used tanks to blast through the town's booby-trapped maze of streets on the final leg of its long march towards Jaffna, where the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have run a virtual mini-state for a decade.

The troops pushed towards Jaffna's town centre in separate flanks after capturing areas north of Chundikuli on its southern tip and south of the Kandasamy Hindu temple at the other end, a Defence Ministry statement said.

Air force jets bombed LTTE targets northwest of Jaffna Fort in the centre of town, the statement added.

"Though pilots have confirmed direct hits on these targets, the number of rebels killed and injured due to air and artillery attacks are not available," it said.

Two soldiers died Monday, while three officers and 24 soldiers were wounded, the statement said.

An estimated 2,000 guerrillas were reported to be trapped inside the town, unable to escape the military gauntlet.

LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran admitted Monday the army might capture the rebel citadel but said it would be "a great historical mistake" for the Colombo government.

"It is not hard to capture a town with massive force. To stand firm in the captured land is the hard thing," the shadowy leader told the rebel Voice of Tigers radio.

Military analysts expect the army to enter the town

soon.

Mr. Prabhakaran, speaking in a broadcast heard in the northern government-ruled town of Vavuniya, said the LTTE had not been "terribly weakened" in the recent offensive and the military had lost more men than the rebels.

"We fought cleverly in a land which is favourable to us," against the army "which came in with a big number of soldiers and heavy armoury," Mr. Prabhakaran said.

The army has so far been expanding its hold on the northern peninsula by pushing forward its defences on a line and by holding on to the territory behind them.

"Maintaining FDLs takes more troops," the spokesman said.

Instead, the army would adopt a new plan to secure the town, repulse rebel attacks and mount their own attacks on rebels, he said. He did not give details of the plan.

Grenade blasts kill 1, hurt 28 in Philippines

COTABATO, Philippines (R) — Unidentified men hurled four grenades in a market in the southern Philippines Tuesday, killing a boy and wounding 28 other people, police and residents said.

Police said the attack was apparently triggered by local political feuds. They had no evidence to link it to current talks in Indonesia between Manila and Muslim

insurgents on ending a 23-year Muslim rebellion in the southern Philippines.

Three men hurled the grenades one after the other at a market in the town of Kabacan in North Cotabato province, town police chief Captain Jose Briones said.

Police said the attack was apparently triggered by local political feuds. They had no evidence to link it to current talks in Indonesia between Manila and Muslim

attacks in other places.

Kabacan, on Mindanao Island, has a mixed Christian and Muslim population of 62,000.

Capt. Briones said "all indications" pointed to a possible connection to the killing of Kabacan Vice-Mayor Karutin Makalipat.

He died last weekend after a bomb explosion in his office last month.

Radio reports said police

were investigating whether the target of Tuesday's attack was a suspect in the vice-mayor's killing who owned a restaurant in Kabacan market.

The police and military have been on top alert throughout the south since last weekend to forestall any attacks by Muslim radicals not involved in the Jakarta peace talks.

S.Korea reinforces military on political unrest

SEOUL (R) — South Korean Defence Minister Lee Yang-Ho ordered the military Tuesday to reinforce readiness against arch-enemy North Korea as the South grapples with political turmoil.

In a letter to military commanders, he did not specifically mention a slush fund scandal embroiling ex-President Roh Tae-Woo and the nation's top businessmen, or a traumatic re-opening of old wounds caused by a 1980 army massacre.

"North Korea is expected to employ a variety of aggressive activities to take over the South through Communist revolution by taking advantage of recent domestic incidents," Mr. Lee said, clearly referring to

those episodes.

He said commanders should firmly unite and strengthen precautions against the Stalinist North.

The two Koreas are still technically at war since the 1950-53 Korean War and in the past several months there have been two armed incursions from the North that have created full-scale security alerts in the South.

Mr. Roh has been arrested and is in detention after admitting to amassing a \$654 million slush fund while in office.

He and his predecessor Chun Doo Hwan also face criminal prosecution after media reports Tuesday said the Constitutional Court had decided to overturn a decision not to file charges against them for directing

the 1980 coup.

President Kim Young-Sam for the first time last week declared the May 17 military action was a coup.

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Media reports said prosecutors were preparing to reopen their investigation into the coup and the massacre. At the time of the events Mr. Chun and Mr.

Roh were both army major generals.

Victims of the Kwangju slaughter Tuesday scoffed at Mr. Kim's initiative.

"I suspect it must be a political show designed to mislead the people," said Chon Kay-Ryang, whose son was killed after being shot in the head by troops that stormed the city.

He noted that Mr. Kim's move came as the public called for a probe into the use of political funds in the 1992 presidential election that swept Mr. Kim to power. Mr. Kim is basking a credibility problem after denying he dipped into Mr. Roh's slush funds to fund his campaign.

Russian doctor pushes own vision, example on campaign trail

MOSCOW (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of Russians have trusted Svetoslav Fyodorov with their eyes. Now he wants them to look around, then give him their votes.

"It pains me that the people whose vision I restored see a ruined country," say the blue campaign leaflets that lie in stacks at Dr. Fyodorov's sprawling medical complex, the Eye Microsurgery Institute.

The stocky, gray-haired surgeon won fame and fortune in Soviet days for his assembly-line surgery for near-sightedness. Then he cast his lot with Boris Yeltsin, branched out in business and continued to prosper in the rough-and-tumble capitalism that followed.

Now Dr. Fyodorov is turning his household name and his wealth into one of the most prominent bids in parliamentary elections next month.

He says his success can be Russia's too — if it just follows his example.

"He is our Ross Perot, a typical self-made man who wishes good for others too," the magazine Novaya Vremya wrote.

Mr. Scalfaro, in a move that some interpreted as aimed at pushing back an immediate election to alter the presidency ends in June, on Monday praised Mr. Dini's government.

When pressed, Dr. Fyodorov lists the pro-reform parties as allies, but he promotes his own ideal of "cooperative" business, in which Russia's giant enterprises would be broken down into millions of small ones wholly owned by workers.

He preaches the virtues of hard work and lots of worker incentives.

Unlike many of Russia's new rich, whom he calls "fat cats," the 68-year-old Fyodorov remains popular despite his empire, which includes casino and hotel holdings.

He is seen as both a savvy businessman who takes care of his employees, and as a doctor — a man who can point to actually having helped people. He is known for giving eye operations to Russians at a discount by charging more for foreigners.

"He's a decent man, ... He could help heal the country," said Margarita Logvenova, a 65-year-old radiologist who plans to vote for Dr. Fyodorov.

"He's a doctor who took the Hippocratic oath, and he won't go back on it."

A poll released last week by the Russian Centre for Public Opinion showed that nearly 10 per cent of respondents listed Dr. Fyodorov among the five or six political figures they trust most.

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History in free flow

IN HIS book, "From Abdullah to Hussein," Robert Satloff, the president of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, subtly observes that Jordanians are most ignorant of their contemporary history because they hardly have any historians, and the few books written by mostly Western and Israeli scholars are effectively not available for them because they are censored.

At a seminar held yesterday to commemorate Wasfi Al Tal, the popular prime minister who was assassinated in Cairo in 1971, historian Ali Mahafzah noted that there was a dearth of serious biographies, scholarly research and chronicling of Jordanian history, especially on relations between Jordanians and Palestinians, to which Mr. Tal fell victim.

As yesterday's commemoration ceremony showed, the best, some would say the only, biography of the late prime minister, was written by an Israeli scholar, Asher Susser. Dr. Mahafzah noted in his review of Mr. Susser's book that when the publication was translated into Arabic, the publishers of the Arabic version chose to omit two chapters, one on the author's conclusions on Mr. Tal's life and the other on Jordan after the prime minister's assassination. Though we are not sure of the real reasons behind the translator's choice to omit these two chapters, we suspect that the censor has ordered them dropped from the Arabic version.

Which leads us to think of the Press and Publications Law, the piece of legislation that prescribes to Jordanians what to read and what to write. It is this law, in the various forms and shapes it took during the past decades, which has empowered the censors to approve or disapprove of any script, be it a chronicle, a scholarly or literary work.

The fact that Jordan has very few biographies of its contemporary leaders, or hardly any serious work on recent history, except for the officially sanctioned version, or any meaningful study on social life, is testimony to the prevalence of a strict mentality that often sees security in inverse proportions to freedoms of expression and thought.

Perhaps Asher Susser was right to conclude in his biography of Mr. Tal that even though most of Jordan's political elite were schooled in the West they still accept and cherish the authoritarian tradition of the Middle East.

Perhaps, this can account for the elite's inclination towards restricting the freedom of expression even more. This inclination, however, does not tally with all other aspirations for democracy, liberation and peace.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER in Al Ra'i said Tuesday that the Ministry of Labour lost its credibility by failing to live up to its promises and to organise the local labour market. Fadi Al Fanek said that the ministry had announced that on July 25 this year, it gave the non-Jordanian workers three months grace period to adjust to regulations after finding that tens of thousands of them have been living and working in the country without valid work permits, but no drastic measures were taken as was promised by the ministry until now. Only a few of the guest workers took steps to adjust to the new regulations and obtained work permits allowing them to get employment in a number of jobs allowed for non-Jordanians, said the writer. The country has at least 100,000 non-Jordanians working illegally and taking the place of Jordanian job-seekers, but the government seems to be disinterested and unable to take any measures against this awkward situation, perhaps due to the influence of wealthy employers who pay far less wages to guest workers for longer hours than they do to Jordanians working less hours, said the writer. The non-Jordanians have been allowed to work in construction and agriculture which lack sufficient Jordanian workers but one can see guest workers everywhere, he added.

A WRITER in Al Dustour said the Palestinian opposition factions harboured by Damascus and living in either Syria or Lebanon will soon face the moment of truth now that Syria is approaching a peace treaty with Israel. Saleh Al Qelb said that the Syrians have asked the Lebanese government to disarm these factions because the area is approaching peace and there was no need for arms. In a further move to show the Israelis his good intentions, Syrian President Hafez Al Assad will at a later stage resort to transforming societies, according to the writer. The problem with these opposition factions is that they tried to ignore the realities about the ongoing political transformation in the Arab region, and they have been trying to stir up trouble for PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat for his deals with Israel at the order of others, added the writer.

Washington Watch

By Dr. James Zogby

Caught between Powell and Gingrich, Dole comes up short

POLITICAL DISCOURSE in Washington during the past two months was consumed with two events. First came the frenzy of speculation that Colin Gen. Powell might make a run for the presidency, and then the letdown when he announced that he would not. Only two days later, the government was virtually shut down and remained so for a week as a result of a bitter dispute between the White House and the Congress over the terms of the 1996 budget.

Outside the media limelight and largely forgotten in both instances was the profound negative effect that both developments had on the presidential ambitions of Republican Senator Robert Mr. Dole, the Senate majority leader, and the positive impact both had for Democratic President Bill Clinton.

Since September, Gen. Gen. Powell was the lead political story in the news on an almost daily basis. His national book tour and his flirtation with a presidential bid delighted the press and political establishment. He was cast as "the ideal candidate, an Eisenhower of the 90's," a moderate Republican who could win that party back from the control of the extreme right wing that has dominated its agenda for over a decade.

At first, the right wing of the Republican party was silenced. But as the Gen. Powell momentum

appeared to grow, conservatives began to speak out against him. Finally, only a few days before Gen. Powell announced that he would not run, a coalition of hardline conservatives gathered to denounce his possible candidacy and announce that they would not allow him to stop their "revolution" which is turning the party and the country in their direction.

Throughout this period, Mr. Dole's poll numbers steadily dropped. At first, polls showed that while Gen. Powell could beat President Clinton in a 2-way race, Mr. Dole still edged out Gen. Powell in most states' Republican primary contests. But toward the end, even in conservative New Hampshire, Gen. Powell was seen to be ahead of Mr. Dole.

And when Gen. Powell finally dropped out, while Mr. Dole breathed a sigh of relief, his polling figures were significantly lower than they were before the episode started. In New Hampshire, for example, he had declined from a pre-Gen. Powell high of 45 per cent to a low of 27 per cent in primary polls, while his nearest challenger in that state, Pat Buchanan, increased his poll numbers from 9 per cent to 17 per cent. And in the national two-way race against President Clinton, Mr. Dole was showing as losing by over 10 per cent — with Clinton leading in almost every region in the country.

It appears that Mr. Dole suffered from too little exposure during the two months of Gen. Powellmania, and that in contrast to the former general he appeared as less of a leader and too much a captive of the rightwing of the Republican party.

But if two months in Gen. Powell's shadow hurt Mr. Dole, the Republican Senator has fared no better in the shadow of his colleague, U.S. House Newt Mr. Gingrich during the one-week shutdown of the federal government.

Mr. Gingrich is an angry and confrontational leader of the right wing's "conservative revolution" in the Congress. While wielding considerable power in the Congress due to the landslide Republican victory in the 1994 elections in which 73 predominantly conservative Congressmen were elected to take control of the House of Representatives, Mr. Gingrich is a remarkably unpopular figure with the public at large. In fact, a recent poll shows that he is as unpopular as Richard Nixon was after Watergate.

The difficulty for Mr. Dole is that it was Mr. Gingrich who led the week-long battle against the White House over the 1996 budget. Not only did the Clinton administration have the upper hand in this war because they were able to portray the Republican budget as too extreme in its

cuts in social spending for the elderly and the poor and disabled, but Mr. Gingrich — as spokesman for the Congressional Republicans — was perceived as too harsh and too rash and too arrogant.

Senate Majority Leader Mr. Dole, the leading Republican contender for the presidency of the U.S. appeared on television each day standing silently next to Mr. Gingrich as the speaker castigated the administration and stole the spotlight.

What everyone in Washington knew was if Mr. Dole had been in charge, the debate with the White House would have been civil, and compromise would have been possible far earlier in the process. So the question that emerged was why Mr. Dole took a back seat to Mr. Gingrich. Was it further evidence of his being captive to the rightwing? And what did it say about his leadership qualities?

Through all of this Clinton came out virtually unscathed. After three years in office the president seemed to have finally found his bearings and emerged as a determined leader. Saying no to the Republican revolution, standing firm on principles and agreeing to compromise only when his priorities were recognised, in the end Clinton looked like the broader electorate that he can be more than the leader of one wing of one party.

Clearly Gen. Powell would have presented a serious challenge to the Democratic President. He could have taken away from the President a number of voting blocs traditionally Democratic in their voting tendencies, especially African-Americans. If Gen. Powell had weathered the inevitable media backlash that engulfs every serious candidate (and now we have no way of knowing if he would have), his challenge to Clinton could have been one of the most exciting in recent U.S. history. But with Gen. Powell gone, Clinton will claim that moderates have no place in the Republican party as currently constituted, a claim that Republicans will have to work hard to refute.

Mr. Dole can still reclaim his leadership mantle and can rise above the role that he has fallen into, but to do that he will have to manoeuvre carefully. With less than 100 days before the first presidential voting in Iowa and the first presidential primary in New Hampshire, the senator will have to lead the budget debate towards a successful conclusion, maintain enough of his conservative credentials to keep his ground against Pat Buchanan in New Hampshire and conservative Senator Phil Gramm in Iowa, while at the same time displaying to the broader electorate that he can be more than the leader of one wing of one party.

Dayton deal holds seeds of own destruction

By Tony Barber

THE BOSNIAN peace agreement represents a brave attempt to assert fundamental Western values in the Balkans after a war in which combatants on all sides treated those values with contempt. The settlement aims to protect human rights, ensure free elections and defend the principle that borders cannot be changed by force, yet it is founded on a division of territory that implicitly recognises that the war's ugliest consequences are unlikely to be reversed.

The central feature of the agreement is that Bosnia remains a united state in its pre-war borders, but is split between a Muslim-Croat federation with 51 per cent of the land and a Bosnian Serb republic with 49 per cent. Sarajevo, which the Serbs wanted to partition, will stay united in the Muslim-Croat federation with freedom of movement for all nationalities.

The agreement awards the federation the eastern Muslim enclave of Gorazde, which is to be linked to the federation by a narrow corridor. But all other towns in eastern Bosnia from which Serb forces expelled Muslims from April 1992 onwards are allocated to the Bosnian Serb republic.

One issue was not settled at Dayton, Ohio, and will be decided by international arbitration within a year. This concerns the Serb demand for a wider corridor

near the northern town of Brcko to connect Serb possessions in west and eastern Bosnia. The Bosnian government wanted access to the Sava river, which runs along the Bosnian-Croatian border in the disputed area, while the Croats were outraged at suggestions that they should sacrifice the historically Croat region of Posavina to accommodate the Serbs. The issue almost torpedoed the Ohio negotiations.

Central Bosnian government institutions will include a presidency, a two-chamber legislature, a constitutional court and a central bank. The government will be responsible for foreign policy, foreign trade, monetary policy and im-

migration.

However, the Muslim-Croat and Serb zones will have their own presidencies, legislatures and — crucially — armies. It is open to doubt whether Bosnia's federal institutions will stamp their authority on the two substates. The agreement envisages free elections to the legislature and presidency as well as to those of the Muslim-Croat and Serb entities within six to nine months. Refugees will have the right to vote in their original place of residence, but it is not clear how they will be helped to exercise this right.

People charged with war crimes by the United Nations are barred from holding office. This would in-

clude Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladić, the Bosnian Serb leaders, and Dario Kordić and General Željko Blaškić, two senior Bosnian Croat leaders.

NATO forces implementing the peace agreement will have the authority to arrest indicted war criminals if they encounter them, but will not be given the task of tracking them down. The peace deal requires the governments of Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and the two Bosnian entities to cooperate with the U.N. tribunal.

In Serbia's case, U.N. sanctions will not be fully lifted until such cooperation is forthcoming and Belgrade addresses other con-

Pope seems besieged by dissent and disobedience

By Philip Pullella

REUTERS

VATICAN CITY — The referendum to legalise divorce in Roman Catholic Ireland was the second international public disappointment in a week for Pope John Paul, who seems besieged recently by disobedience and dissent.

The end of a 58-year-old ban on divorce in Ireland came less than a week after the defeat of devoutly Roman Catholic Lech Walesa at the hands of ex-communist Aleksander Kwasniewski in the Polish presidential elections.

"It is difficult for the Holy See to swallow two sensational international knockouts in only seven days," the Rome newspaper *La Repubblica* said on Sunday.

In Ireland, the closest re-

sult in the country's electoral history came only four days after the Pope intervened in the campaign by urging the Irish "to reflect on the importance for society of the indissoluble character of the marriage bond."

The Irish chose not to listen to the Pope, just as the people in his Polish homeland decided not to follow the guidance of the once mighty and princely Polish church, which had thrown its weight, albeit belatedly, behind Mr. Walesa.

The significance of the double defeat in two of the European countries most associated with Catholicism will not be lost on the Vatican, church sources said.

Ireland was a softer blow for the Vatican than Poland because of the slim margin by which the divorce referendum won.

Another source said the church may have to rethink its methods of appealing to the people and of trying to exercise political influence in Catholic countries.

In both cases, church sources say, some people may have voted the way they did deliberately to spite the church because they felt its influence over daily life was excessive.

When the common enemy was communism and he led the pro-democracy charge, Pope John Paul seemed unbeatable, particularly in his homeland.

But recently he seems besieged by disobedience and dissent.

Last week, he felt compelled to remind his own Catholic theologians they could not openly contest official church teachings such as bans on abortion and contraception.

A week earlier, faced with opposition over the church's ban on women priests, the Pope asked the Vatican's doctrinal office to issue a ruling that a 1994 papal document outlining the ban was a definitive and infallible part of church teachings.

A poll taken for a conference of Italy's church hierarchy showed that many Italians considered lifting a more serious sin than adultery, homosexual activity or premarital sex.

Earlier this month, some 1.5 million Roman Catholics in Germany, members of a movement called "We Are the Church," signed a petition calling for reforms including the ordination of women and an end to priestly celibacy.

Austrian Catholics signed a similar petition in September.

With media like ours, how can one be surprised that rumour-mongers succeed in spreading any lies, no matter how blatant? A constructive suggestion would be for our media to start treating Jordanians like adults, rather than like children to be mollycoddled in blissful ignorance.

Media tremors

IN THE days before peace with Israel, whenever Jordanians wanted to know what was happening in Jordan, they tuned to Radio Israel. Whether it was a reshuffle of the Jordanian cabinet, a trip by a Jordanian dignitary abroad, or a visit by a foreign official to Jordan, it was invariably announced on Radio Israel well before the Jordanian media had uttered a word about it. I hope that the spirit of peace, and the increased consideration which our Israeli neighbours show for our sensitivities will not deprive us of this valuable source of information. The reason I say this is that Jordanian media seem to dwell under the misconception that their mission in life is not to inform the citizen, but to protect him from unpleasant facts — or pleasant facts — in fact, any facts.

Take, for instance, the earthquakes that hit Jordan and neighbouring countries last week. Earthquakes, in general, are unwelcome occurrences; but they are acts of God, and as such, no one whether in government or outside it can be blamed for them, nor for the damage they cause. Why, then, did our media do such a poor job of covering them? Were they afraid of upsetting God?

It may be considered a step forward that the tremors were reported at all. But look at the coverage. A leading Arabic daily reported to its readers last Friday that: "A new earthquake of force 5.1 degrees hit the south of the Kingdom, but it did not cause any damage or casualties." Adjacent to this news item, another story announced that: "His Excellency the Prime Minister inspected the consequences of the earthquake and praised the speed and efficiency with which government agencies responded to it."

Let us see now. Is it conceivable that the same quake should have caused damage in Israel and Egypt, but not in Jordan? Could a tremor be so selective as to damage Eilat but not Aqaba, which is a few metres away? Better still, there was no damage, right? To what, then, did government agencies respond with speed and efficiency? What consequences did the prime minister inspect if they did not constitute damage? Could they have been beneficial effects? Moreover, having been comforted by the assurances that the damage, which did not occur, was well handled and inspected, we were further reassured that no further tremors were expected, but that all necessary precautions have been taken to cope with them.

On that score, may we be informed what these measures are? I have every confidence that, in an emergency, every member of the police and civil defence would do their utmost to help the citizens.

A poll taken for a conference of Italy's church hierarchy showed that many Italians considered lifting a more serious sin than adultery, homosexual activity or premarital sex.

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Barcelona Declaration sets out clear parameters

(Continued from page 1)

Javier Solana said the declaration was adopted "comprehensively and unreservedly, after enormous difficulties."

The agreement was salvaged by dropping a clause proposed by Syria recognizing the right to resist foreign occupation.

The final declaration said participants pledged to "promote regional security by acting in favour of nuclear, chemical and biological non-proliferation through adherence to and compliance with a combination of international and regional non-proliferation regimes," including the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

However, it did include a recognition of the right to self-determination, demanded by the Palestinians and opposed by Israel.

Acknowledging the right to self-determination, demanded by the Palestinians and opposed by Israel.

To establish a common area of peace and stability, delegates pledge to:

— Develop the rule of law and democracy in their political systems;

— Respect human rights and fundamental freedoms;

— Combat racism and xenophobia, and ensure respect for different groups;

— Respect the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination in line with the U.N. charter;

— Respect each other's territorial integrity, and reaffirm the right to exercise sovereignty by legitimate means in accordance with the U.N. Charter;

— Strengthen their cooperation in combatting terrorism, organized crime and drug problems;

— Promote regional security in favour of nuclear, chemical and biological non-proliferation through adherence to and compliance with a range of international and regional agreements, including the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and aim for a Middle East free from weapons of mass destruction;

— Refrain from developing military capacity beyond defence requirements.

Economic and security partners:

rich and poor has been billed as marking a new start for the region with its huge social and political problems.

— Prosperity and stability go hand in hand. This must be the main message to go out from this conference," British Foreign Minister Malcolm Rifkind told a round-table on economic issues.

He told South and East Mediterranean nations, many of whose economies remain under state control, that the route to growth lay via greater economic liberty and a vigorous private sector.

The 12-page Barcelona Declaration is divided into three sections addressing political and security, economic and financial, and social and cultural cooperation.

Here are the main points:

Political and security partners:

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— Refrain from developing military capacity beyond defence requirements.

Economic and security partners:

To create an area of shared prosperity, delegates pledge to:

— Acknowledge the problems caused by high debts, and pledge to continue dialogue;

— Speed up economic development, improve living conditions for their people and reduce the gap between Europe and the southern and eastern Mediterranean;

— Aim for a target date of 2010 to create a Mediterranean free trade zone, as far as EU agricultural policies and GATT negotiations allow;

— Open their economies and promote the private sector, creating a climate suitable for investment;

— Coordinate to protect the environment, promote the participation of women in public life, modernise agriculture and address the shared problem of water resources.

The European Union pledged to put up 4,685 million ECUs (around \$6 billion) from 1995-1999 in aid to help countries make the economic transition, together with a similar amount in loans.

Social and cultural partners:

To promote mutual understanding, delegates pledge to:

— Promote cultural exchanges, concentrate on the health sector and boost social development;

— Realise that large population growth must be counterbalanced by economic development;

— Establish closer cooperation to face illegal immigration, be aware of their responsibility for readmission and create jobs and training to reduce migratory pressures; and

— Strengthen cooperation against terrorism, drug trafficking, international crime and racism.

As a follow-up to Barcelona, there will be a regular meeting of their foreign ministers beginning in early 1997 in a Mediterranean country yet to be decided, as well as ad hoc meetings of ministers and experts in specific fields.

Document adopted after dispute

(Continued from page 1)

by some diplomatic sources as a "pessimistic" issue.

Syria played a major role in opposing the suggested definition of terrorism, demanding that the declaration distinguish between terrorism and legitimate defence against the enemy," he said.

Although the terrorism issue took up a major part of the talks before and during the conference, including a late night session between the Spanish foreign minister and his Arab counterparts, it managed to delay the issuing of the final declaration by two hours.

The shelling covered a 25-kilometres front facing the western and central sectors of the "security zone." More than 400 shells fell on the area, Lebanese police and U.N. peacekeepers said.

Security sources said the three — who were buried Tuesday at a funeral attended by 2,000 people — were killed in an Israeli air raid on Sunday that targeted the Iqlim Al Tufah, one of Hizbullah's strongholds.

Israel's artillery also rained hundreds of shells on suspected guerrilla positions north of the zone, at a rate of one a minute, and staged mock raids drawing retaliatory fire from Lebanese army anti-aircraft guns.

The violence flared after Hizbullah announced the death of three of its guerrillas.

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Flowery philosophy bounds in Barcelona

BARCELONA (R) — The

Bible, the Crusades and the cradle of civilisation were the speechwriters' favourite tools as European and Mediterranean ministers beat their verbal swords into ploughshares in an orgy of historical metaphors.

Muslims, Christians and

Jews turned their backs on

centuries of enmity to invoke

the one God to whom they all

pray with ringing calls for a

new era of understanding.

Spanish Foreign Minister

Javier Solana opened the

Bailea Euro-

Mediterranean conference

by nailing their

swords to the ground.

Not too long ago, Israel's

Arabs neighbours often

invited the Israelis to the

Crusades, vowing they too

would be driven out of the

Middle East. Peace has

been banished such talk in public

since their

independence.

Mr. Barak, until recently

Israel's top general and, by

his own acknowledgement, a

man of the sword rather than

of the ploughshare, wove

perhaps the most convoluted

metaphor in two days of historical and biblical sword-beating.

After citing Prophet

Isaiah's words, he said he was

now joining "the club of

peacemakers and peacekeepers,

a club whose symbol is

the ploughshare and the olive

branch."

"Let us make sure the

modern ploughshares, the

computers, will help people

to prosper," Mr. Barak

ploughed on.

British Foreign Secretary

Malcolm Rifkind urged

Mediterranean nations to

beat their swords to shares,

saying only a free market

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Egypt maintains export surge, trade deficit widens

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian exports soared by more than 50 per cent in the first half of 1995, raising government hopes that Egypt's goal of an export-driven economic revival could finally be under way.

Total exports, including oil, rose to 6.74 billion Egyptian pounds (\$1.98 billion) in the first six months of the year from 4.43 billion (\$1.30 billion) in the same period last year, according to figures released by the ministry of economy and foreign trade Monday.

But imports also soared by nearly a half to 18.37 billion pounds (\$5.40 billion), widening Egypt's trade deficit for the first half of 1995 to 11.63 billion pounds (\$3.42 billion).

The government, which has ambitious plans to triple exports within three years, says it is more concerned about encouraging the con-

tinued exports boom than by the widening trade gap.

Prime Minister Atef Sedki was quoted in the government newspaper Al Ahram Monday as saying the latest export target was \$11 billion by 1998, compared to \$3.46 billion last year.

The trade ministry figures showed the 1995 export surge was maintained throughout the first six months of the year, apparently quelling the doubts of local businessmen that first quarter figures might not be sustainable.

Some said the initial boom might have been due to one-off factors like the clearing of state cotton stockpiles, one of Egypt's prime foreign currency earners.

Cotton exports more than doubled in the first half of 1995 to 477 million pounds (\$140 million).

But other chief agricultural exports, including potatoes,

onions and oranges also rose more than 100 per cent.

Exports of manufactured goods like batteries, sheet iron, cement, shirts and medicines all more than doubled, the ministry figures showed.

The robust half-year performance will further strengthen Egypt's band in talks with the International Monetary Fund, which believes the pound is overvalued and could harm exports.

The pound has been effectively pegged to the U.S. dollar for the last four years, but Egyptian interest rates and inflation have been consistently well above U.S. levels.

Imports, particularly food staples like wheat, maize and edible oils, rose sharply in the first half of 1995. Imports of durable goods, including cars, refrigerators and televisions, rose by a third to \$14 million.

Imports of manufactured goods like batteries, sheet iron, cement, shirts and medicines all more than doubled, the ministry figures showed.

But the ministry said the biggest sector increase for imports was for "investment goods" including spinning tools, trains, tractors, and computers, which rose 54 per cent to 4.15 billion pounds (\$1.22 billion).

"These are all imports which could in the end lead to more exports," Mostafa Said, undersecretary for information at the ministry told Reuters.

Egypt's Minister for Economic Cooperation Youssef Boutros-Ghali said earlier this month he was not worried if Egypt's trade balance slipped further into the red.

"I don't care. I don't mind. No problem. We want exports to put Egyptians to work, not to address a balance of payments problem," he added.

Turkey launches forward foreign exchange market

ANKARA (R) — The Turkish central bank Monday launched a forward foreign currency market for the first time in a move to lessen uncertainties which have recently put the lira under pressure, a senior bank official said.

"The new practice is not a shock measure. It was introduced because markets were in need of it," the central bank's acting Governor Osman Cavit Ertan told Reuters.

The move followed a week of surging foreign exchange demand which forced the bank to intervene in the markets by selling dollars to defend the lira.

"Forward market is the most efficient instrument to provide stability in markets," Mr. Ertan said.

Turkish bankers welcomed the establishment of the forward foreign currency market.

"It is a correct and well-planned step," said Mustafa Gurin, general manager of Garanti Investment Bank. "The bank will also regulate the bond and lira markets by giving tacit lira interest rates."

The central bank initially quoted a Dec. 6 price of 54,539/578 lira per dollar against about 54,000 lira in the spot market.

Political uncertainties ahead of the early general election on Dec. 24 and year-end position adjustments have boosted the demand for the dollar.

"Our programme is ready. It aims to restructure the economy and the state," Isim Celebi, former economy minister and deputy ANAP chairman, told Reuters.

His party has yet to announce details, but Mr. Celebi said the programme gave priority to fighting inflation and included measures to cut fiscal deficits and reduce the state sector.

The wholesale price inflation was about 79 per cent last week. The loss has exceeded four per cent so far this month.

Bankers say present foreign currency and lira rates offer them a profit opportunity by selling in the spot market and buying in the forward.

Politicians know the phrase "austerity programme" among Turks, many of whom suffered 30 per cent cuts in real wages last year, and this realisation discourages parties from unveiling their economic recipes in advance.

Before the 1991 general election, ANAP openly said that whichever party wins Turkey's general election next month will have to take radical measures to rescue an economy beset by inflation, high deficits and an underperforming state sector.

Sources close to Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's True Path Party (DYP) and the main opposition, the Mother-

land Party (ANAP), say they have completed policies to be implemented if they win the election on Dec. 24.

"Our programme is ready.

They say Turkey should increase tax revenues, restructure a social security system that is near collapse, and privatise or close down loss-making enterprises.

"Turkey must put a stabilisation programme of 24 to 30 months into implementation in early January," Economics Professor Tamer Berksoy told a conference last week.

He said tax reform was crucial to the success of the programme.

Foreign investors still maintain interest in Turkish markets. A total of \$5.6 billion of foreign capital flowed into the economy in the first eight months of 1995.

ANAP's Celebi said increasing the inflow of foreign capital was crucial to his party's programme.

medium-term economic stabilisation programme is put into effect by a government with domestic and international credibility.

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Railmen paralyse France

BRUSSELS (R) — The road to a single currency European Union (EU) looked rocky Tuesday after the bloc's finance ministers sidestepped some tough decision and left their leaders to sort them out at a summit next month in Madrid.

Meeting in Brussels Monday,

the ministers failed to agree the precise date at which countries would be judged for fitness to participate in a single currency.

They were also at odds over how legal the currency would be and whether government debt should be denominated immediately in it.

The ministers also ran into an arcane roadblock over a legal framework for the currency, an issue some see as critical to the credibility of monetary union.

The EU has yet to decide whether the new currency would be legal tender at the planned start date of Jan. 1, 1999. In addition there is no agreement on how financial contracts maturing after the launch date would be affected.

Some consider the legality

aspect of the utmost importance and worry that a delay

in this issue would undermine private sector willingness to use the new currency.

Another item of contention was whether participating governments should be obliged to issue new debt in the single currency immediately. Germany, somewhat alone on this issue, said governments should be free to decide on how to proceed.

In sharp contrast to these difficulties, however, there appeared to be widespread support for German Finance Minister Theo Waigel's proposal for a budget "stability pact" among countries forming a monetary union.

"We got very wide, very positive acceptance. No one was against it in principle," Mr. Waigel told a news conference.

The ministers agreed the issue needed further study in 1996 so as to become a central plank of monetary union.

Yet with several issues still

unresolved, EU leaders next month in Madrid will have to work hard if they want to give a future European currency a solid push forward.

EU ministers dodge tough issues on single currency

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Beaujolais Nouveau 95 arrived with Air France

AIR FRANCE held its annual reception of Beaujolais Nouveau 95 at Forte Grand Amman on Nov. 23, 1995. Air France, in cooperation with Forte Grand and the French Embassy in Amman, hosted this reception in honour of its frequent flyer customers, its top agents and the French companies settled in Jordan.

Japan's Kizu Credit Union loses \$9.6b

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's collapsed Kizu Credit Union, the largest such institution in the country, had incurred losses of 960 billion yen (\$9.6 billion), the Bank of Japan said.

It said an examination of Kizu by the Osaka Prefecture also revealed the credit union had recoverable but non-performing assets of 230 billion yen.

"Kizu Credit is in the extraordinary situation where performing assets are only about 120 billion yen, compared with total assets of 1.31 trillion yen," the Bank of Japan said in a statement.

The finance ministry said in a separate statement: "Kizu Credit Cooperatives' bad debts exceed more than 90 per cent of its total assets of 1.31 trillion yen and is in an extremely abnormal situation.

"It is necessary to pursue thoroughly the responsibility of management that brought down such a situation," it said, adding that an ongoing investigation may result in criminal action against the former management.

Kizu was suspended Aug. 30 and authorities subsequently put it into liquidation following the disclosure of its bad loan situation.

The Bank of Japan said Wednesday that the business operations of Kizu would be transferred to Tokyo Kyodo Bank, which would be restructured into a Japanese version of the Resolution Trust Corp. launched in the United States to deal with the U.S. savings and loan association crisis earlier in the decade.

But the central bank said such an entity would require parliamentary approval and so Kizu's operations would not be transferred until legislative changes were in place.

Under the scheme, "budgetary support" would be sought from the Osaka prefectural government as well as the "maximum amount of financial assistance by the Deposit Insurance Corp." Financial support would also be sought from related financial institutions, the Bank of Japan said.

Financial Markets in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

Currency	Monetary		Tokyo
	Close	Close	
Sterling Pound	1,5595	1,5510*	1,5511/12/95
Deutsche Mark	1,4375	1,4388	
Swiss Franc	1,1565	1,1569*	
French Franc	4,9215	4,9347**	
Japanese Yen	101,75	101,55	
European Currency Unit	1,2695	1,2685**	

** For RMB
** For RMB

Monetary Interest Rates Dates 28/11/1995

Currency	1 MTH	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
	U.S. Dollar	5,50	5,61	5,43
Sterling Pound	6,50	6,72	6,85	6,75
Deutsche Mark	5,48	5,48	5,45	5,54
Swiss Franc	5,15	5,15	5,15	5,15
French Franc	5,10	5,15	5,10	5,15
Japanese Yen	6,10	6,10	6,10	6,15
European Currency Unit	5,25	5,31	5,25	5,18

Interest rate rates for months exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Dates 28/11/1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
	0,902	0,910
Sterling Pound	1,6977	1,7032
Deutsche Mark	0,4915	0,4940
Swiss Franc	0,8106	0,8137
French Franc	0,1432	0,1438
Japanese Yen*	0,6966	0,7001
Dutch Guilder	0,4390	0,4412
Egyptian Pound	----	----
Italian Lira*	0,0444	0,0446
Belgian Franc	----	----

Other Currencies	Dates 28/11/1995	
	Bid	Offer
Currency		
Lebanese Lira*	0,013735	0,014350
Kuwaiti Dinar	0,1870	0,1918
Kuwaiti Dinar	2,3070	2,3670
Omani Rial	0,1982	0,1945
Egyptian Pound	0,1105	0,1100
Oman Rial	1,3350	1,3318
Greek Drachma*	0,2115	0,2150
Cypriot Pound	1,5125	1,5000

For 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One U.S. dollar	1.3538/48	Canadian dollar
	1.4354/64	Deutschmarks
	1.6080/90	Dutch guilders
	1.1550/68	Swiss francs
	29,50/54	Belgian francs
	4,9209/59	French francs
	159,62/77	Italian lire
	101,22/32	Japanese yen
	6,5060/60	Swedish crowns
	6,3180/30	Norwegian crowns
	5,5513/13	Danish crowns
	1,4120/30	Singapore dollars
	0,7492/97	Australian dollars
	7,7352/62	Hong Kong dollars

One sterling

\$1,5486/96

One ounce of gold

\$389,00/8950

For 100

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Ajax win World Club title on penalties

TOKYO (R) — Captain Danny Blind converted his side's last penalty to give Ajax Amsterdam the World Club Cup with a 4-3 shootout victory over Brazil's Gremio after a 0-0 draw following extra-time on Tuesday.

Ajax were always in front with their penalties after Edwin Van Der Sar saved from *Dinho* and *Francisco* arce hit the bar with Gremio's second even though Patrick Kluivert put the Dutch side's opening spot kick wide.

Ajax dominated the match but were unable to breach the strong Gremio defence even though the Brazilian side were down to 10 men from the 56th minute.

Paraguayan central defender *Catalino Rivarola* was sent off for his second bookable offence, a second successive foul on teenage striker Kluivert in the space of three minutes.

Yet in terms of clear-cut chances Gremio's Jardel was as guilty as Kluivert and Ajax's Finnish international *Jari Litmanen* of missing a virtually open target more than once.

The result left South America leading Europe 33-21 in the annual match and 10-6 since it was switched to Tokyo's national stadium in 1980.

It was the third time since 1985 that the match was settled by penalties and the fifth occasion it needed extra-time. In 1988, PSV Eindhoven of the Netherlands lost on penalties to Uruguay after a 2-2 draw.

The victory finally rewarded the more enterprising side on a bitterly cold afternoon that had some Brazilian outfield players wearing gloves.

But when Kluivert missed Ajax's first penalty, the Dutch must have wondered if they would ever find the target after a string of misses during the 120 minutes' play, though the teenage striker saw his looping header rebound off the bar in the 74th minute.

Ajax appeared to have been lucky not to have Dutch international winger *Marc Overmars* sent off minutes after Rivarola's dismissal.

Overmars swung an arm in front of *Arlison*'s face and the Gremio midfielder went down holding his mouth.

But English referee *David Elleray*, who had his back to the incident, simply went ahead with a free kick he had already awarded Gremio after consulting his linesman.

The match could have got out of hand at that point as the Brazilian side demanded *Overmars* be sent off, but *Elleray*'s firm hand steered it away from trouble.

Near the end of the first half out almost exclusively in midfield, Kluivert should have done better with a header off a fine cross from the right by Nigerian *Finidi George*. But, trying to rise between two defenders, he headed well wide.

Ajax should have won the match in the second half.

Litmanen was too forceful with an attempted lob from the left and put the ball over early in the second half. Minutes later he found himself free right in front of goal but shot straight at Gremio goalkeeper *Daniel*.

At the other end, 10-man Gremio should have gone ahead minutes after Rivarola's departure but it was the tall *Jardel*'s turn to shoot wide from a good position.

Jardel also put a header from a cross by Paraguayan *arce* wide

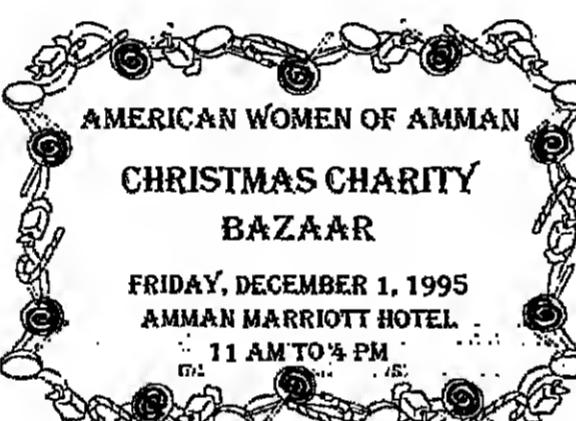


Netherland's Ajax MF *Edgar Davids* and Brazil's Gremio MR *Arlison* struggle for the ball in the World Club Cup match (Reuters photo)

after *Daniel* had saved from *Kluivert* who was fed by a neat backheel from busy midfielder *Edgar Davids*.

Blind was the next to miss, his volley from a pass by substitute *Nwankwo Kanu* sailing high over the bar.

In the dying minutes of extra time, *George* curled a fine shot from the left out of the diving *Daniel*'s reach and only just wide of the far post.



A U.S. loan broker is visiting the Kingdom for a short period of time and would like to meet interested businessmen for joint ventures.

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Education: University degree (preferably in Engineering)

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Around 10 years experience in Earthmoving Equipment, Management, Strategic Planning, Marketing, Finance and After Sales Services and repair practices.

Essential Qualities:

- Excellent command of English.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to direct, develop, implement plans and objectives as well as monitor marketing and sales activities.
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Remuneration: Salary plus bonus.

A permanent residence permit in the West Bank or Gaza is a valuable asset.

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1. M. Ezzal Jallad & Sons P.O. Box 110208 Beirut - Lebanon
2. Jordan Tractor & Equipment Co. P.O.Box 313 (11118) Amman - Jordan

The closing date for receiving applications is December 15th, 1995. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

A Regional Inter-Governmental Organisation is seeking a highly motivated, skilled, career-oriented, professional individual (female or male) with the following qualifications:

- A university degree in a field related to rural development.
- Full command of English and Arabic languages (French is an advantage).
- Computer proficiency is necessary.
- Good team worker.
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- The ability to adapt to and fit in many different situations.
- Capable of working long hours when needed.

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P.O.Box 2550
Amman 11181 - Jordan

The closing date for receiving applications is December 15th, 1995. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

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CINEMA TEL: 699238

CINEMA TEL: 677420

CINEMA TEL: 618274 - 618275

Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155

PHILADELPHIA

PLAZA

CONCORD

AMMOUN THEATRE

TODAY AT

Kevin Costner
in
WATERWORLD
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45

Nadia Al Jundi, Farouq Fishawi and Mahmoud Hamideh in
A Woman Who shook the Throne of Egypt
(Arabic)
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CONCORD "1"
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30

CONCORD "2"
Sylvester Stallone in
ASSASSINS
Shows: 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:15

MUSA HIJAZIN "Sumaa"
in
Hi Citizen
daily at 8:30 p.m.
Written & directed by
Mohammad Shawaqfeh

Italian amateur banned until 21st century

POTENZA (R) — An Italian amateur soccer player has been banned until the year 2000 for repeatedly kicking a referee who showed him the red card.

Giovanni Pecoraro, who played for Real Calvello in a Basilicata local league in southern Italy, was banned on Monday after being sent off in the second half of a match against Pietrapertosa on November 19. Real Calvello lost 2-1.

The sporting judge's report, banning him until November 18, 2000, said the player had "first shouted abusive language at the referee and then kicked him repeatedly."

"I am feeling it all but I get a day of rest here before the second round so I should recover."

British champion Stephen

Meads lost 8-15 15-13 11-15 15-11 15-12 in 86 minutes to South African qualifier Craig Wapnick.

Dan Jensen, a young Au-

Jansher keeps on winning

DOHA (R) — Jansher Khan, straight from winning the Pakistan Open on Sunday, opened his bid for a 71st international tournament title with a win over Australian Byron Davis in the first round of the Qatar International Squash Championship in Cairo this month.

World champion Jansher, who boarded a plane immediately after his win in Karachi, has now played 16 matches in 19 days.

"I played straight through the World Open in Cyprus, the World Team Championship in Cairo and then at home in Pakistan," Jansher said after his 15-11 15-11 17-15 victory over qualifier Davis.

"I am feeling it all but I get a day of rest here before the second round so I should recover."

Mark Chaloner, who clinched the world team title for England in the deciding rubber of the final against Pakistan, added Zubair Jahan Khan to his list of victims.

Zubair took a two-game lead and led 5-3 in the third. But the young Englishman showed the nerve and courage of a seasoned professional as he gradually took command of the court and worked steadily to a 6-15 11-15 15-9 15-12 15-9 triumph.

Magic nip Pistons as Hunter forgets score

ORLANDO (R) — Nick Anderson scored a season-high 31 points as the Orlando Magic edged the Pistons 96-95 Monday, thanks in part to Detroit guard Lindsey Hunter losing track of the score on the last play of the game.

Down 96-93 after Orlando's Joe Wolf made a foul shot with five seconds left, Hunter passed up a game-tying three-point attempt and inexplicably drove for a layup at the buzzer for the final margin.

"Well, we needed a three, that was obvious," Pistons coach Doug Collins said. "So we wanted to push the ball up and get a three. Lindsey just made a mistake and went to the basket. He's a young player and he just made a mistake."

"They jumped at me on the three," said the 24-year-old Hunter, a third-year pro. "I naturally reacted and went around. I just wasn't thinking."

Dennis Scott scored 18 points and Penny Hardaway added 16 as the Magic won their fifth straight and extended their home winning streak over Eastern Conference teams to 40.

Orlando, a league-best 12-2, remained unbeaten at home this season (9-0) and has won 16 straight regular-season games at the Orlando Arena, dating to last season.

Allan Houston and Terry Mills led the Pistons with 19 points each. Mills also had 10 rebounds and Hunter added 18 points for Detroit, which had a two-game win streak snapped.

Orlando, already without superstar centre Shaquille O'Neal, played without forward Horace Grant, who missed the game with a sprained right ankle.

"I didn't think it was one of our better performances of the month," Magic coach Brian Hill said. "But playing short-handed and with Horace out, I've got to credit the guys."

In Toronto, Willie Anderson scored 26 points and Dan Stoudamire made a key steal and layup in the



Utah Jazz forward Karl Malone (right) attempts to block Phoenix Suns guard Chris Carr's shot during first quarter (Reuters photo)

final minute as the Raptors edged the Golden State Warriors 101-98 to snap a two-game losing streak.

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH
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FORTUNE FAVORS THE BRAVE

Both vulnerable. West deals.

NORTH
A 875
QAK9
QAK
+QJ74

WEST
A K932
Q 784
Q QJ10
+K8

EAST
A 64
862
Q 9754
+10632

SOUTH
A QJ10
Q 103
Q 632
+A 95

The bidding:
WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
Dbl Dbl INT INT

Pass 3NT Pass Pass

Opening lead: Three of a

In bridge as in chess, the winner is often the player who is able to project the play further ahead. This hand, from a team match, is an example of what we mean.

At both tables the final contract was three of a trump, reached on identical auction. South's trump response to the takeout double shows some 8-10 points, although it might be slightly shaded where the opening bid is one spade. North is full value for the jump to game.

North's spade bid is one spade short of a game. A relieved West took four spades and a diamond to earn a just reward.

With the king of clubs marked on West's hand, the bidding was as follows. Both declarers looked for game partners than a club finesse. They started by running four rounds of hearts.

At one table West discarded a diamond and a south heart. Decliner cashed the ace and bid four diamonds, then threw West on lead with a spade. After taking four tricks in the suit, West was forced to lead away from the king of clubs. Both declarers combined major tenace to give declarer two tricks in the suit and the contract.

The other West saw the endplay, and discarded the eight of clubs on the last heart. On the ace of diamonds West followed with the king of clubs. To declarer, it looked as if West's last six cards were four spades and K of clubs, so South tried for the same endplay by exiting with a spade from dummy. A relieved West took four spades and a diamond to earn a just reward.

Bosman ruling will not damage small clubs'

BRUSSELS (R) — Small soccer clubs will not suffer if the European Court of Justice accepts advice to outlaw the player transfer system, Belgian lawyer Jean-Luc Dupon said on Monday.

"Nobody is going to disappear," said Dupon, the lawyer for Belgian player Jean-Marc Bosman who has asked the European Union's court of justice to declare European soccer's transfer system and limits on foreign players illegal.

The court could decide on a transitional period (to a more open system) of five years," Dupon said at the end of a European Parliament convention on sport.

"An end to clubs organising the market would be best for everyone," he added.

Carl Otto Lenz, one of the European court's advocates-general (legal advisers), has recommended that the court rule the transfer system breaks EU law on freedom of movement for workers.

But UEFA, the sport's governing body in Europe, told the convention that Lenz's recommendations, if accepted by the court, could create a two-tier system of clubs.

Small clubs, which rely heavily on transfer payments, fear they will go under in a free market.

"Football is not just about the big clubs and the great stars but also about the thousands of clubs and the hundreds of thousands of players at every level across the length and breadth of the continent," the presidents of the 49 national soccer associations in UEFA said in a letter.

The letter dismissed Lenz's proposal of safeguarding smaller clubs by redistributing a percentage of all clubs' income.

"(The advocate-general's) proposed alternative — that funds should be redistributed with nothing in return — is simply unworkable," it said.

Monday's convention had no legal bearing on the court decision, which is expected early next year.

Bosman's case began in 1990 when FC Liege of Belgium blocked his proposed transfer to French club Dunkirk.

Liege later suspended Bosman who is now seeking damages of about \$1 million from UEFA and the Belgian soccer union, claiming he was unofficially blacklisted after starting the court case.

FIFA has expressed concern that European Union countries would be left out of step with the rest of the world if the European court accepted Lenz's advice.



Oakland Raiders quarterback Vince Evans in the first half of their NFL game in San Diego tries to recover his composure after being sacked by San Diego Chargers Leslie O'Neal.

Chargers win field-goal battle

SAN DIEGO (R) — John Carney kicked four field goals and Dwayne Harper had three interceptions as the San Diego Chargers defeated the Oakland Raiders 12-6 Monday in the first NFL game without a touchdown in more than a year.

Carney booted field goals of 39, 24, 28, and 38 yards as the Chargers (5-7) handed the Raiders (8-4) a rare Monday night loss.

Oakland, which played without starting quarterback Jeff Hostetler, fell two games behind the Kansas City Chiefs in the AFC Western Division.

The last NFL contest in which neither team reached the end zone was November 20, 1994, when the Arizona Cardinals edged the Philadelphia Eagles 12-5.

Harper joined Steven Moore as the only players with three interceptions in a game this season. The record is four, last done by Kansas City's Deron Cherry in 1985.

Oakland's offence, led by 40-year-old Vince Evans, entered the game averaging 367 yards per game but committed four second-half turnovers and was limited to 285 yards.

United's Clark's men looked to be hanging on for three points after 20-year-old Paul McGregor marked his full debut with a dream goal in the 19th minute.

United had wasted a catalogue of chances, with Andy Cole and Ryan Giggs — who hit the post when clean through — the most culpable.

But in the 67th minute Cantona, who had gone six

games without scoring — the worst spell of his United career — since returning after his enforced nine-month absence with a spot-kick equaliser against Liverpool, repeated the dose.

It was the Frenchman who was felled from behind by Steve Chettle after he seemed to have lost control of a pass by substitute Paul Scholes.

Forest protested furiously when referee Keith Cooper instantly pointed to the spot, but the Scottish defender had undoubtedly made contact and Cantona ignored the jeers to stroke confidently

home.

Scholes and Andy Cole for United, and Ian Woan, Colin Cooper and substitute Richard Irving for Forest, could have won it before the end. But the home side's defensive resilience meant they at least deserved to extend their unbeaten home league run to 15 games, while United were more than worth a draw.

United's one-touch interplay left Forest chasing shadows, and after Nicky Butt fired just wide Cole should have put them ahead in the 10th minute.

Butt linked with Ryan

Giggs — operating, like Cantona, with a roving brief — and his perfectly-weighted pass found Cole's angled run, the 7 million man failing to beat Mark Crossley.

After that start it was something of a surprise to see Forest go ahead with their first real attack.

United went to sleep as Cooper carried the ball forward after a free-kick, and somehow allowed his pass to reach Howe via two pairs of legs.

Gary Pallister, at least, was alive to the danger, but although he slid in to deny

Howe a shot it fell perfectly for McGregor to side-foot home from 12 yards.

McGregor, who came off the bench to score Forest's UEFA Cup winner against Lyon last week, might have had a second 12 minutes later, meeting a driven free-kick Stuart Pearce but heading just too high, before United picked up the baton again.

Cantona volleyed wide after a delightful flick by David Beckham left Pearce a spectator and then shot outside the other post, before the best opening of the half went begging.

France's Tapie given jail term

DOUAI, France (R) — A French appeals court sentenced ex-Marseille soccer boss Bernard Tapie on Tuesday to eight months in prison with another 16 months suspended and declared him ineligible for public office for three years.

The sentence, on charges of match-fixing and interfering with witnesses, was the first prison term confirmed against the ex-cabinet minister who has been declared bankrupt and faces a host of other lawsuits over his collapsed business empire.

The delay could allow Tapie to turn to his next project — starring in a film by prize-winning director Claude Lelouch.

The court handed Jacques Mellick, Tapie's former colleague in a socialist-led cabinet, a one-year suspended jail sentence and declared him ineligible for public office for two years.

Mellick was convicted of lying to provide Tapie with an alibi from accusations that he interfered with a witness to cover up the match-fixing scandal.

Tapie had been sentenced by a lower court to a year in jail with another year suspended for bribing players of rival league team Valenciennes, joked as he entered the court, in the northern town of Douai. But he was grim as he left.

"I believe everyone will judge what eight months in prison mean compared with 250,000 francs (\$50,000) given for a soccer game without my knowledge," he said.

His lawyer appealed

against the verdict on technicalities.

His immunity from jail as a member of the French national assembly will be lifted automatically if the supreme court confirms the verdict. But it was not immediately clear if his immunity as a member of the European Parliament could still protect him.

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'Aqaba suffered more from the media than the quake'

Untrue reports of damage cut deep into tourism business, hoteliers complain

By Amy Henderson
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AQABA — Tourists mill around, the port is as busy as ever, shops are open and business is as usual in Aqaba, six days after a strong earthquake epicentred about 110 kilometres into the Red Sea from here that shook the Middle East from Lebanon to Sudan.

Damage in Aqaba wrought by the earthquake was minimal compared to the quake's magnitude — in Aqaba measuring 6.1 on the Richter scale — and was grossly exaggerated, Minister of Tourism Abdul Ilah Khatib said.

"Aqaba was the least affected in the region," Mr. Khatib said. The centre of the quake was far

from most populated areas in the region.

Since the quake, rumours have abounded concerning the extent of damage, but both Mr. Khatib and Aqaba Regional Authority President Fayed Khasawneh said that the reaction was over-exaggerated.

"The panic and fear among citizens wasn't justified," said Mr. Khasawneh, "but they also weren't able to get adequate information. The Israelis were transmitting live and direct (from Eilat), where things were much worse, so people were making assumptions."

The areas most affected were low areas close to the beach, he added, which naturally includes several hotels, and excludes most residential areas. "But

even (in areas near the beach) damage was mild and most was non-structural — fallen panels and broken glass. The sand and water helped absorb a great deal of the shock."

"We did not find any homes that needed to be evacuated," he said.

Public facilities such as water and electric supply were not disrupted by the quake; nor were the thermal power plant or fertilizer complex damaged, which are designed with a mechanism to shut down automatically during such a situation.

"These were the things that posed the most imminent danger," Mr. Khasawneh said. "If the Didi (water) line had broken, the damages caused by it would have far exceeded that caused by the earthquake

itself."

The series and intensity of the aftershocks that followed the quake were "comforting," Mr. Khasawneh added, because it showed that the stored energy being dissipated was up to three times the energy dissipated between 1969 and 1995.

A main concern to Aqaba was the earthquake's effect on the tourism industry, the town's mainstay. This is the first year since the Gulf crisis most hoteliers would start the low season without a loss, said Simon Khouri, proprietor of Aquamarine I, II and III, but the "bad advertising" in the press has put them back to square one.

Aqaba hoteliers assailed the press for exaggerating the situation, frightening

not only residents of the town but also tourists. "The damage that we sustained from poor media coverage outweighs that which we sustained from the actual quake," said Abdul Aziz Kababri, manager of the Coral Beach Hotel, who spoke to journalists on behalf of Aqaba's hoteliers.

He added that he intended to sue local papers for reporting that his hotel had suffered the greatest damage. "I have superficial damage," he said, pointing to vertical cracks in the Coral Beach dining room. "Some glass was broken and some marble tiles fell off the wall, but (there was) no structural damage."

"The problem is that we've had cancellations," he said. "We had an Australian charter cancel be-

cause it was reported that 50 per cent of the beds in Aqaba were (not available) because of the quake."

Among the Aquamarine hotels, Mr. Khouri said that at the outset of the first half of low season (Nov. 20-Dec. 20), he had 45.5 per cent reservations in his hotels, but since the earthquake, one hotel has dropped to 12 per cent. "I don't think our hotels will reach 25 per cent (capacity) next month."

Mr. Khouri said that he estimates physical damage to his hotels at JD 150,000, but puts his loss of business as a result of cancellations through February at JD 500,000.

"All these tourists are rerouted to Amman," he said. "So Jordan doesn't lose, but Aqaba does."

According to Mr. Kababri,

it, only two hotels in Aqaba have been closed down. The Aqaba Hotel has closed 12-14 rooms, but its chalets remain open, and the Mirimar closed after an exterior staircase pulled pipes and electric wiring away from the building.

The swimming pool and nightclub at Aquamarine I, which extends over the water, maintained damage caused from water pressure underneath the structures, but the hotel remains open.

"Hotels in Aqaba, by law, are built to withstand a (quake of a) magnitude of at least seven," he said.

The last major earthquake and the first scientifically recorded geophysical movement in the region struck the area in July 1927. It measured 6 on the Richter scale.

COLUMN 10

Indian government asked to explain mail delays

NEW DELHI, India (AP) — If Americans think their postal system is "stuck in the mail," consider this: Millions of letters mailed in April in India still have not been delivered. A strike by thousands of postal sorters working in trains that carry the mail has delayed delivery across the nation.

Mail bags have piled up at post offices and people are seething with rage. One of them has filed a public interest lawsuit in the New Delhi High Court. After a hearing Monday, the court demanded an explanation from postal authorities within two weeks. In April, the government stopped paying overtime to postal workers, which led to the backlog.

Greetings mailed in October during the major Hindu festival of Diwali are still lying in sacks. The mountain of mail is expected to grow higher with Christmas around the corner.

Teachers injured in tussle over outdoor toilet

BEIJING (AP) — Farmers and teachers came to blows recently in a feud over an outdoor latrine next to a preschool near the eastern city of Nanking. Li Shilong, brother Li Shishen and his son, who was not

named, allegedly attacked the women teachers on Nov. 17 after they tried to prevent the men from digging the outdoor toilet under

the Jewish settlement" in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Two other rabbis, Shmuel Dvir, from Karmei Tzur settlement in the West Bank, and David Kav, from Ashdod, south of Tel Aviv, have already been questioned twice on Sunday and Monday following Mr. Rabin's assassination.

Assassin Amir, and his brother Hagai, who is suspected of complicity in the killing, have said they were "very influenced" by rabbis before the murder.

Police also released three members of the right-wing Eyal group to which Amir had links. They had been held for taking part in a bizarre televised initiation ceremony on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem.

Amir Orange, 20, from Jerusalem, Eras Ozalv, 23, from Hebroo and Moshe Herrenfeld, 18, from Haifa, who were placed under house arrest and hunted from speaking to journalists after being held for seven days.

China to ban market cheats' lever scales

BEIJING (AP) — A 2,500-year-old tradition will come to an end in the Chinese capital this week when a law banning the use of lever scales takes effect, kicking off a nationwide drive, the China Daily said Tuesday.

The ancient scale, a long graduated stick suspended from a string with a basket at one end and a sliding weight at the other, is widely used in free markets — and has long been used to cheat customers who cannot easily monitor how it works.

Police meanwhile pulled in a third rabbi for questioning on Tuesday in investigations into the assassination.

Rabbi Nahum Rabinovitch from the Maale Adumim settlement just east of Jerusalem was told to report to Petah Tikva police station.

Police said he was sus-

'11th-hour shift in security cost Rabin his life'

TEL AVIV (AP) — A last-minute change to security plans may have allowed the assassin of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin to get within inches of his target on the night of the murder, the Jerusalem Report said Tuesday.

The state inquiry set up after the murder to investigate security failings by the Shin Beth internal security services will have to find out whether Mr. Rabin was left with only two bodyguards because the others unaware of the change of plan were still waiting in the crowds.

Organisers said the original plan was to let Mr. Rabin and former Foreign Minister Shimon Peres mingle among the crowd at the Tel Aviv peace rally on Nov. 4, according to the magazine.

But it was changed at the last minute because the 100,000-strong crowd was too large and unarmed security officials thought it would be too dangerous, said the magazine which appears every two weeks.

Instead Mr. Peres descended the stage first virtually unprotected and Mr. Rabin followed with only two bodyguards.

Assassin Yigal Amir fired three bullets at the late prime minister, two of which hit him, while the third struck a bodyguard.

He had mingled near to Mr. Rabin's car pretending to be among the security party, and then tried to confuse police by shouting that the shots were blanks.

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HQ of militants is in England — Alfi

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt stepped up its criticism of Britain on Tuesday as Interior Minister Hassan Al Alfi said in an interview that London was home to the headquarters of Egyptian extremists.

The information centre of Egyptian terrorists is located in Britain, "General Alfi told the government daily Al Ahram.

"These terrorists are active on British soil where they hold meetings and give orders for missions. They are continually moving in and out of London and all the attacks have been planned from outside Egypt," Gen. Alfi said.

Egyptian officials have held meetings with their counterparts in various countries and we gave them the information we have," Gen. Alfi.

The minister also lashed out at the Muslim Brotherhood, accusing them of implication in the Pakistan bombing.

"They claim to be innocent. But in reality it's quite the opposite and their actions prove it. Does Islam permit, for example, the crime in Pakistan?" he said.

"According to the information we have, the Brotherhood is behind all the terrorist movements in Egypt and in several Arab countries," Gen. Alfi said.

Egypt has stepped up calls

Indiana woman gives birth to quintuplets

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — It's a boy and a girl ... And a girl ... And a girl ... And, yes, another girl. Connie Loisch delivered the quintuplets after taken fertility drugs. She gave birth three months early. The mother and newborns were "doing well," Dr. Lynda Smits said.

The father, Jan Loisch, said he was relieved: "It all became a reality when I heard my first baby girl cry." The Loischs already have one son, a six-and-a-half-month-old, and a daughter, a one-month-old. The couple got married in 1993.



ARAFAT MEETS BARAK: Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and the new Israeli foreign minister, Ehud Barak, meet early Tuesday at Barcelona's Ray Juan Carlos Hotel in their first encounter after Mr. Barak was appointed foreign minister on Thursday. Both Mr. Arafat and Mr. Barak were attending the European-Mediterranean conference in Barcelona that ended on Wednesday (see page one) (AFP photo)

Egyptians go to polls today amid opposition complaints of abuses

CAIRO (Agencies) — The Egyptian opposition and human rights activists complained on Tuesday of serious abuses likely to ensure the ruling party a sweeping victory when Egyptians vote for a new parliament on Wednesday.

Opposition parties say this case, where the new voters were registered en masse within one month, was only the tip of an iceberg and the same has taken place elsewhere.

Muslim Brotherhood spokesman Mamoun Al Hodeibi said police were conducting "mass arrests against our delegates who were to have observed the election count."

The arrests "prove that the government wants to cheat in the elections," Mr. Hodeibi said.

He said 600 Brotherhood delegates had been detained in various regions across Egypt while others had fled their homes to escape police.

"It seems the government decided to cheat against our candidates because it knows that we constitute the main political opposition force," said Mr. Hodeibi, who is himself running in the vote.

The Brotherhood and its ally, the Labour Party, have a total of 244 candidates in the race, according to a latest count.

In several cases, we found names of voters who were registered in several polling stations, something which only NDP candidates could do because of their influence on local officials," he added.

The supreme administra-

tive court rejected on Monday an appeal by the government against an earlier ruling cancelling the registration of 13,518 out-of-town voters in one Cairo district where a minister is running as a candidate.

"We represent for the government a real danger because if we have 150 delegates (in parliament), they will have to take care. But if we're only 10, that won't bother them much," Mr. Hodeibi said.

But Mr. Hodeibi refused to speculate on the outcome of Wednesday's elections, saying: "I can't predict anything because that depends on the extent of the fraud."

"If none of our candidates is elected that would mean the fraud was 100 per cent."

The Egyptian government has turned down several demands by international and local groups to monitor the elections, the fourth since President Mubarak came to power in 1981.

Interior Minister Hassan Al Alfi told the government newspaper Al Ahram on Tuesday international monitoring would violate Egyptian sovereignty. The judiciary supervised the elections, so there was no need for local monitoring, he said.

But Ibrahim Abaza, assistant secretary-general of the liberal Wafd Party, disputed

this claim.

He said that out of 27,000 polling stations, judges would be present in only 1,800 main ones, while the rest would be under the control of police.

"This is where most of the rigging takes place, and not in main stations," he added.

"It makes no sense to talk of sovereignty, because the government itself has sent observers to monitor elections in South Africa, Algeria and Tanzania. So, why do we accept monitoring there and not in our own country?" he added.

Abdul Hamid Al Ghazali, a Muslim Brotherhood candidate in Cairo, said the low turnout in cities also opened the door wide for the practice of ballot rigging.

In major cities the turnout has never exceeded 20 per cent, and since the law does not require voters to sign their names after voting, it will be easy for the election officials, under NDP pressure, to vote for those who do not show up, he said.

"Egypt is one of the few places where the dead and absent can vote. When there is nobody around, simply put a tick in front of the name and a ballot paper in the box. This way the turnout goes up and the same for the NDP votes," Mr. Ghazali said.

elections the authorities scrapped when they looked poised to win, starting the conflict. Mr. Kebir is the group's spokesman in Europe.

Mr. Kebir sent a letter to Mr. Zeroual shortly after he was elected addressing him as "Mr. President, the legitimate president of the elections."

FIS leaders inside Algeria have said they are considering a unilateral truce in the fighting against the government.

But analysts say it is not clear if the group's political leaders still control militant guerrillas. Since 1992, FIS has also been eclipsed in the fighting by the Armed Islamic Group (GIA).

The group's original leaders, Mr. Madaoui and Mr. Belhadj, have been in jail in Algeria since 1992, although the authorities have opened political contacts with them in prison.

Top Algerian general assassinated

PARIS (Agencies) — A senior Algerian army general has been killed by armed men near his home in an Algiers suburb, the first general slain in the civil war, informed sources here said Tuesday.

General Mohammad Boutighe, head of the Algerian army's coast guard operations, was killed Monday evening near his home in Hydra, an area where a number of embassies and army chiefs' homes are located, they said.

The sources said it was the first slaying of an Algerian general since civil war broke out between the government and opposition Islamic fundamentalists after the cancellation of elections in January 1992.

No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack, Gen. Boutighe, who was born in 1936, was trained notably in the former Soviet Union, and had been a military attaché in Rome.

In September, General

Boutighe, who was seriously injured in an attack in Algiers, a number of other senior army officers, but not generals, have been killed in the unrest.

The attack follows presidential elections in Algeria this month boycotted by fundamentalists, in which President Lamia Zeroual won over 61 per cent of the vote, office.

"Some media inside and outside Algeria have exploited the statement issued by the parliamentarian mission in reaction to brother Rabah Kebir's letter to General Zeroual and have given it misplaced interpretations," Mr. Haddam's statement said.

"Our statement has only one goal, that of confirming the known positions of the FIS's genuine line which were voiced by FIS President Abassi Madani and his deputy Ali Belhadj," he added.

Mr. Haddam, based in Washington, leads a group of FIS members in exile who stood for parliament in the

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